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# MY LIFE

AND

# WHAT SHALL I DO WITH IT?

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# MY LIFE

AND

# WHAT SHALL I DO WITH IT?

A QUESTION FOR YOUNG GENTLEWOMEN

BY AN OLD MAID

SECOND EDITION

LONDON
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS
1861

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

MY FATHER

# NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

A SECOND EDITION of my little work being called for, I am anxious to guard against an exaggeration to which some expressions used in it might seem to lead.

In proposing different works of charity as an employment for educated women in easy circumstances, the statement that it is their duty to engage in them was intended to be strictly confined to those who have no other real and sufficient employment. I believe such works are designed to form the general occupation of these women, if they are not prevented from engaging in them by having domestic or other work; and if circumstances, or their own character, or gifts, do not lead them to some other more special occupation. There are ladies so well fitted to be useful in the common things of their own rank of life, and who find room there to exercise their gifts, it would be a great loss to all of us were these to devote themselves to the common things of the poor; there are sunbeams in society whom the workers least of all could spare: there are some women, as there are men, who ought to devote themselves to intellectual study, though they may never become writers: there are artists

and musicians of talent sufficient to make their art a real occupation.

But these are exceptions: the greater part of the world have no peculiar gift for any one special work.

I believe, therefore, that it is the duty of parents not only to set their grown-up daughters free to occupy themselves in such works of charity as they wish to engage in, but also to give them every reasonable facility in their power for finding out whether they do wish for it: just as much (and no more) as it is their duty to give them the opportunity of choosing whether they wish to marry, and not to prevent their marrying from worldly or selfish motives.

I believe that it is the duty of these young women not to live for themselves, and not to live without some real occupation, even though the only ones circumstances offer for their choice are not such as they would have preferred. Should any one think the argument from Scripture goes further than this, it seems to me she may safely so apply it as a rule for her own conduct; but even in doing this, it is well to remember that we have not to serve an austere Master, but One who never requires from us what He has not given to us; who is not extreme to mark what is done amiss; and whose law is no burden laid upon us for condemnation, but a life-giving word, intended to strengthen and defend us.

*December*, 1860.

# CONTENTS.

## PART I.

### THE WORKERS AND THEIR WORK.

### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

Object of this Book.—Relative Position and relative Duties of Gentlewomen.—Do the Poor need us?—Apology for a threadbare Subject.—Much said, but Little yet done.—Difficulties in the Way of Common-place People; and Defence of the Common-place.—Wish to aid them.—Why this Book has nothing in it profound.—Exaggerated Importance attached to this Portion of Women's Work must lead to Disappointment . . . . . Page 1

### CHAP. II.

#### THE GENTLEWOMEN WHO ARE AT LEISURE.

Their comparative Condition and its Advantages.—Their Want of Work.—What is Work?—Unmarried Gentlewomen have often no real Work in their own Families.—How can they use their Lives?—Answer given by an Edinburgh Reviewer.—By the "Saturday Review."—By the Author of "Morning Clouds."—In the "Christian Remembrancer."—Little Home Duties.—Work answering to Education.—Outward Character formed by Habits—Conclusion "Not Wanted" at Home.—This Want of sufficient Work not unimportant: unchristian, unhealthy, unhappy.—Results: Nervousness, a morbid Conscience, perverted Talents.—Evils of an Education above their Work.—Two Remedies.—To teach less: Not practicable.—To give Work: This lies waiting for them . . . 16

## CHAP. III.

THEIR EDUCATION.

The Education of Gentlewomen after School.—An Interlude on Christian Training.—Education intended to fit us for our Life on Earth.—Amusements, and their Use.—Grown up. Page 44

## CHAP. IV.

THEIR LIFE AND ITS USE.

Helpmeet for Man.—Help for the Ungentle and Suffering.—Bishop Butler's Statement of the Claims these have upon us.—Our Want of Work owing to our Neglect of this Half of it.—Who can help them.—The Way opening.—Society and her Sanction . . . . . 53

## CHAP. V.

THEIR QUALIFICATIONS.

The Use of Gifts.—Responsibility for them.—What Gifts have we?—Power of sympathising.—Unpaid Labourers.—Time to learn and to teach.—Station in Life . . . . . 64

## CHAP. VI.

THE WOMEN WHO ARE UNEDUCATED AND WHERE THEY ARE TO BE FOUND.

Who need our Help.—Their Numbers: in Prison, in Workhouses.—Emigrants.—In Hospitals.—In Refuges.—Condition of the rest . . . . . 75

## CHAP. VII.

HOW THEY ARE BROUGHT UP.

Their Homes; their early Habits; daily Life.—Domestic Service.—Their Amusements.—Their Advantages.—Obliged to labour.—Day Schools.—Sunday Schools.—Their Condition when grown up.—Results.—Immorality.—Infidelity . 84

## CHAP. VIII.

THE REMEDY.

Who can help them?—How?—Attempts to get regular Work for Women.—Consequences of this: Lower Wages; Hindrance to Marriage.—Danger of Workshops.—By christianising them, one by one.—By Example.—The old Work in a new Form.—How they may learn it.—Deeds, not Words.—Steady Aid wanted; and such as we could give . . . Page 98

## CHAP. IX.

OUR WARRANT.

1. Is it our Work?—How our own Work is pointed out to us.—Argument from Analogy; from Scripture.—St. Paul's Account of Women's Duty.—Conclusion.—2. Is it safe?—Danger of losing Innocence.—Force of this Objection.—Ignorance of Evil.—When the Knowledge of Evil is degrading.—Loss of Innocence inevitable; but may be turned into a higher Good.—This Work itself purifying.—Amount of the Risk . 115

## CHAP. X.

A PROTESTANT CHAPTER; SHOWING HOW THE WORKERS AND THEIR WORK MAY BE BROUGHT TOGETHER.

How to reach those who need us.—Separation of their Homes and ours: Effect of this.—To help them we must live amongst them, and work in union.—Evils of isolated Labour.—Advantages of such central Homes in large Parishes for securing: 1. Division of Labour; 2. Needful Instruction for the Workers; 3. The Permanence of the Work; 4. For training Servants, and Industrial Teaching; 5. Relief to those who need it.—Plan of a Ladies' Home: its Government.—Union for Work only.—Length of Residence desirable, etc. . . . 135

## CHAP. XI.

WHAT WE CAN DO FOR THEM BY TEACHING.

In Day Schools: Reading Lesson.—Ragged Schools.—Sunday Schools: Importance of them; our chief Means of giving

personal Christian Teaching. — Women the best Teachers of Religion for Children.—They afford Opportunity for prolonged Instruction, and allow of a real Education being given. — No Burden to the Scholars: the Day of Rest. — Importance of thorough Teaching.—Choice and Preparation of Lessons: how to give them. — Bible Classes. — Sunday Classes for Shop-women: their peculiar Need. — Object of such Classes: their Business, Dress, and Courtships.—Of Night Schools: Caution in managing them. — Subjects of Instruction. — Mistakes in selecting them. — Mistakes in the Language used in Teaching. — Singing and Drawing Classes. — Sewing Schools, and Plan for managing them.—Mothers' Classes. — Expenses of a Night School . . . . . Page 159

## CHAP. XII.

### WHAT WE CAN DO BY PERSONAL INTERCOURSE.

Foundation laid for this in our Schools: — 1. In their Amusements: providing Books. — Dangers of "religious" Trash. — Sound Literature—Holiday Amusements.—2. In their Work: teaching Household Work—Training Girls for Service—Teaching our own Servants. — 3. In helping them to higher Work: as in the Case of Servants, fitting them to rise to higher Stations. — In Sunday Schools employing them as Teachers.— Using Hospitals as Schools for Nurses. — Engaging their Assistance in Works of Love . . . . . 201

## CHAP. XIII.

### WHAT WE CAN DO BY VISITING, AND GIVING RELIEF.

Need of a definite Object in visiting the Poor. — Of Religious Visits: Regularity in visiting. — Choice of Books for Reading. —Of visiting the Sick, Afflicted, and Aged.—Visits to Parents. —Of relieving their Wants: Necessity of this. — Causes of Poverty.—Danger of making Paupers.—Who deserve Relief? — Inefficient Help both degrading and expensive.—Out of Work. —Relief by weekly Doles inefficient.—Relief by giving Work: how to afford this. — The only effectual Aid is enabling them

to help themselves.—Effects of being out of Work.—Foresight of Working Men. — Foresight in ourselves. — Possible and impossible. — Permanent Help must be self-supporting, *e.g.* Emigration. — Of incurable Poverty.— Material Relief first.— Sorrow and Love . . . . . Page 224

---

## PART II.

### THE PREPARATION.

Introduction, Twofold Preparation needed . 269

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE EDUCATION NECESSARY.

Who are educated? — Of thinking clearly. — Causes of Confusion of Thought: too great Haste, want of Attention. — Clear Thinkers.—Bishop Butler's Introduction to his Sermons.—Dr. Abercrombie. — Archbishop Whately. — Hooker. — How to study. — Object of studying. — Of clear Views of Truth. — Modes and Substance . . . . . 272

### CHAP. II.

#### THE KNOWLEDGE REQUISITE.

Physical and mental. — To know how to use our Knowledge. — First Principles of Induction. — Herschel's Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy. — Necessity of good Sense and Intelligence for the Work . . . . . 293

### CHAP. III.

#### PRACTICAL HABITS TO BE ACQUIRED.

§ 1. Being purpose-like. — A clear Purpose: uselessness of Work without this; how it solves Difficulties; enables us to work together.——§ 2. The Habit of Obedience.——§ 3. The Habit

of attending to what passes before us. — Of judging about others: Knowledge of Character, in what Sense needful. — Tact, the Fruit of Attention to the Feelings of others: Necessity of acquiring it. — How? — Acquaintance with the Uneducated. — Caution in forming any Opinion about them. — Personal Influence . . . . . Page 301

## CHAP. IV.

### PRACTICAL PREPARATION.

§ 1. For Nursing: Practice. — Thoughtfulness. — Artistic Nursing. — Use of Remedies. — Cooking for the Sick. —— § 2. For Teaching: Sewing — Household Work. — Drawing; Form, Colours. — Designing Patterns. — Singing. —— § 3. The Art of reading aloud: to a Class; to the Aged: to the Sick. — Art of recounting Stories to Children. — Bible Histories. — To the Uneducated . . . . . 325

CONCLUSION . . . . . 349

# PART I.

# THE WORKERS AND THEIR WORK

# MY LIFE

AND

# WHAT SHALL I DO WITH IT?

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

OBJECT OF THIS BOOK.—RELATIVE POSITION AND RELATIVE DUTIES OF GENTLEWOMEN.—DO THE POOR NEED US?—APOLOGY FOR A THREADBARE SUBJECT.—MUCH SAID, BUT LITTLE YET DONE.—DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF COMMONPLACE PEOPLE; AND DEFENCE OF THE COMMONPLACE.—WISH TO AID THEM.—WHY THIS BOOK HAS NOTHING IN IT PROFOUND.—EXAGGERATED IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THIS PORTION OF WOMEN'S WORK MUST LEAD TO DISAPPOINTMENT.

"Our province is virtue and religion, life and manners, the science of improving the temper, and making the heart better. This is the field assigned to us to cultivate; how much it has lain neglected is indeed astonishing."—*Bishop Butler.*

THE object of the following pages is to point out, especially to the younger portion of our sisterhood, the more usually practicable ways in which educated gentlewomen*, who have the leisure and

* At the risk of seeming affected, I prefer using the word "gentlewomen," to the more usual one "ladies," as being one that

the will, may employ their own advantages in the improvement of uneducated and ungentle women, and of their social condition; and to show how they may best prepare for the work.

The class to whom I write is therefore a very limited one, and the subject on which I write is still more so; for though we are apt just now to think and speak of it as though it were the only, or at least the chief work that unmarried ladies

refers more to personal character than to social position; and as having, through its general disuse, retained more of its proper meaning than now attaches to the indiscriminately applied and therefore unmeaning word "lady." It is much more difficult to find a word that shall shortly and truly denote the other class of whom I shall have to speak so often. The working classes, if ranged according to the amount and hardness of their work, must certainly begin with the higher members of the learned professions, and include our great manufacturers and merchants, and so through our clerks, and tradesmen, and farmers, and skilled mechanics, &c., down to those who support themselves and their families by purely manual labour — the least worked and therefore the worst off of our working men. It is chiefly the mass of people below these last — those I mean who do not support their families or themselves, whose condition calls so pressingly for improvement. These are what our manual workers mean by the "lower orders:" and I would have used that term, but that it is so often applied by ourselves in a much wider and less correct sense. In fact, where no real boundary line exists, too much precision in defining terms may lead rather to confusion than clearness. "Uneducated" is perhaps the best, as expressing the one want, which though not the most pressing, is yet common to all the different classes of whose need of help we shall have to speak; but I must beg my readers to bear in mind that "educated" and "uneducated" are always used here in a relative, not a positive sense, unless the contrary is expressly stated.

have to do, it is, in fact, only that portion of their duty which arises out of one of several relations in which they are commonly placed: *i. e.* the relation in which, as educated, they stand to the uneducated, as gentle to the uncivilised; as being themselves in easy circumstances, to the suffering and poor. And as this is scarcely the whole duty of any, so I am far from supposing the work resulting from it is the proper work of all. Each one must decide this first question for herself, according to the circumstances in which she is placed. But whilst there is so general a complaint of the want of any real occupation and object in life for our unmarried gentlewomen, on the one hand, and such continual calls for such help as it is said gentlewomen could give, on the other, it cannot be justly deemed a merely sentimental inquiry, when we ask how far, and in what way, they who are asking for unpaid work can give that unpaid help which is needed.

Now, whether the want of something more in the way of occupation than society supplies us with be a matter-of-fact want, or only the result of morbid indolence, and of a desire to exchange the monotony of existing home duties for the excitement of more novel ones abroad, is a question on which great difference of opinion still seems to exist, if not amongst ourselves, yet amongst those whose consent and support is very necessary for us; and this, therefore, cannot be taken for granted. But that the uneducated do stand in

some considerable need of such help as we could give them, may I think be fairly assumed as a fact already proved and confessed.

For it is admitted on all sides that much more must be done than has yet been attempted for the untaught, unchristianised, suffering, and often degraded masses, whose numbers are certainly not decreasing in our country. Every writer on the condition of our population calls for "more agency, more immediate, more minute." Every report of our benevolent or judicial reformatories reveals to us a new mass of human misery, not yet perhaps beyond the reach of human aid, but as yet unreached by it. Nearly all the reports of our societies for social improvement or relief conclude by asking, "Are there no Christian women who could devote themselves to this or that part of our work?"

It has been shown by Mrs. Jameson in her two well-known little works, "Sisters of Charity" and "Communion of Labour," what has been done elsewhere, by persons like ourselves, in this work, especially in hospitals, reformatories, and prisons. And in the practical lectures to ladies, delivered by professional men who spoke from their own experience; and in the letters on workhouses (in the journals of the Social Improvement Society, and in the reports of the "Workhouse Visiting Society"), we have been told how far such agency as ours is needed here, to complete the work of our hospitals and workhouses, for the relief of the sick

poor at home, for the education of their children, and the teaching their women.

It has been already proved by the lady nurses at Scutari, and now in King's College Hospital, what ladies can do in the way of nursing and training nurses. Other hospitals are asking for similar help, and cannot as yet obtain it. And I think, if we take a fair estimate of our different reformatories and refuges for women, and their results, we shall see that unpaid gentlewomen have, on the whole, been proved to be more likely to recover the fallen, than the paid matrons *whom we are able to obtain.* Indeed these last, when thoroughly fit for their work, have some important advantages over us; but it is impossible to find enough of them; and even when one has been found, the constant care of one lady superintendent, at least, has never yet been safely dispensed with.

But this subject has been discussed so frequently, and by so many and such well-known writers, who have a just claim to be listened to, that it seems necessary that an utterly unknown individual who comes forward to say something more about it, should give some better reason for asking to be heard than its already proved importance. My reason is this: I have read a good many of the works written on this subject, and some of them, especially the three I have named, with great interest and thankfulness. But when I have asked myself: If I had read these books

at twenty, when I was desiring to begin to do something for my poorer neighbours, would they have helped me? I have thought they would not; that rather they would have filled me with the most passionate longing to go somewhere and do something, great, self-sacrificing, vague. That Mrs. Jameson's lectures would then have set me dreaming,—not about the dull and rather dirty old woman with her chronic and incurable rheumatism who lived in the lane near,—but about the hospital at Kaiserwerth, or the prison school of Neudorf. That the practical lectures would have crushed my wish under despair; just because they are so truly practical, whilst the work they propose would have been as much beyond my powers, as the help they offer was out of my reach. And at twenty it is hard to endure a bathos; one cannot bear to be forced back from the noble ideal to the petty reality, from saving lives, and restoring hope and happiness to ideal homes, from reforming hundreds,—to making a few shy and awkward attempts to recommend neatness to one or two unteachable housewives, or teaching half-a-dozen children to spell "cat" and "bat" week after week; though at fifty the contrast is not only endurable, but has even a charm of its own. It seemed to me, therefore, that much as has been said about women and women's work, and what it should be; yet how to set about this particular portion of it, and the close and inevitable connection that subsists between the right perfor-

mance of our outward duties to the uneducated, and our higher ones in domestic and social life to the educated, has not yet been made so clear. Whilst others have shown our accomplished gentlewomen what great use they may make of their talents, and have set before our young women a noble—because a true—ideal of what they may be, my aim is to point out to these last the first steps by which they may set out towards its realisation.

The consequence of what has been already said and done in this matter, is a greatly increased amount of interest and of exertion on the part of educated people, in behalf of this or that society, or in desultory efforts amongst the poor here and there. And still more, that every month almost some one or two are stepping out of the ranks, volunteering for some special portion of the work, and devoting their time and strength to its fulfilment. But the rank and file are wanted, and not merely to play at doing good; and they remain still: many of them, as I well know, grieving over the miseries of which they hear, vexing themselves because they are still idle, and yet remaining so.

There is a threefold difficulty in the way; first, there is a doubt whether it would be really right to put themselves in a somewhat new position, and choose a work for themselves, to which neither their relations nor the customs of society have called them; and whether, if they did under-

take it, they should be able to perform it successfully. And, secondly, the exceedingly practical difficulty, how are they to get at the people who need their help; where and with whom are they to live whilst engaged in helping them. And then, after the manner of women, if the one doubt seems likely to be resolved, the other is instantly substituted for it; and before that is decidedly routed they have fled to the third, and so round again through the still unsettled first. Now women of talent and energy, who can take up their own position, choose their own work, and silence criticism by an evident success, may call these doubts, which never troubled themselves, cowardly and weak; to me it seems they are founded on truth, and are such as ought to be felt by us. We can gratefully admire those who have no need to feel them; without such leaders to open the way for us, and to teach us how to follow it, we of the rank and file could never have hoped, probably should never have wished to escape from the weight of a purely artificial custom, "heavy as frost, and deep almost as life," which would bind us down to an easy, useless existence. But as we are not equal to them, we cannot do all that they have done. One enthusiastic leader bids young gentlewomen "go out into the world to work and be independent, and trust their own hearts to tell them what is womanly and pure." Now I say that such advice given to young women of average ability is simply absurd: where is the world?

how are they to get into it? what shall they do when they are there worth doing? And if they were there, would not the (disgracefully childish, but still) somewhat pertinent question rise up, "Were it not as well to go home again, by the dressing bell?" The fact is, they are not independent either in character or in fortune; and their own hearts, at any rate their common sense, tells them that older women are more likely to know what is womanly, more experienced men what is safe. So also the exhortation to remedy their want of occupation by "finding out something to do, and doing it well," has been repeated so often, they nearly all know it is their duty; and very likely clever women need no more than this; but for girls of average ability and character the questions, "What ought I to do?" and "How shall I do it well?" are just the very two they know not how to answer.

And yet it is certain that if the work which has been pointed out to us by the deeds, or won for us by the success of our greater leaders, is to be done effectually, it must be done in its details by women of merely average character; by ignoble souls, supinely indifferent to women's rights, and stupidly unconscious of woman's wrongs; by women who are very dependent, possibly rather narrow-minded, and much too timid to walk abroad without the correct veil of conventionality, though in their own way, when well guided and little noticed, they could do and suffer something. It must be done by women, some of whom, deaf to

true philosophy, have been used all their lives to make much self-conscious question about motives and feelings; who can see no good but what has been shaped in the particular mould they were put into; or who try hard to draw sharp boundary lines, with all sorts of obtuse and acute angles in them, between the confines of right and wrong, and to enforce their strict observance on all; by women who would count it a fearful and intolerable burden to possess a liberty after Mr. Mill's sort; or who, in spite of Mr. Kingsley's superb contempt, do feel much anxiety about the saving of their own souls as well as the souls of others. All these weaknesses, and many more, were it worth while, might be alleged against us; and yet, with them all, we know we could do many things, and we believe we could learn to do more, for the still worse educated and much suffering people whom we have been told to help, if we did but know how to get to them, and how to set about it. We could do things, which though small in detail, are yet very necessary should be done for them by some one or other; some things which no other class of agents, better qualified and sufficiently numerous, can be found to attempt; and some things which none but ourselves can do at all. Nor is it of any use to wait till we are better qualified, seeing that the average character of any class of grown-up workers can only be raised by letting them set to their work in good earnest.

But they have not yet found their way to the work. My object is to aid those who are left to themselves in the matter in doing this; to assist them in coming to some conclusion upon the question, whether this particular work for the uneducated and poor is their work at all, and how far it is so; to point out those portions of it which are best fitted for beginners, and which lie nearest home to most of us; and to show them how by beginning with these they may be fitting themselves for the more important and responsible offices to which they may be called. I have gathered, from too many sources to be always named, such directions as I have found useful to myself, or have known to have been successfully practised by others; and by the remembrance of my own difficulties, blunders, and failures, and by learning something of the plans, and watching the successes of others, I have endeavoured to supply those beginners who are thrown on their own resources for instruction and guidance, with such help as can be given in words. Writing for these, it seemed better to run the risk of being tediously minute than of being too vaguely comprehensive; the hints given will be found superfluous by many: my object will be fully attained if they should be found so useful to a few, as that, in a much shorter time than it has taken me to learn them, they may have advanced very much beyond them. At present it is in and from the work itself, and by their personal exertions, they must

obtain such training as Mrs. Jameson demands for them from the nation. Life is too short to be spent in waiting for Acts of Parliament; but if the young gentlewomen of the present day will honestly do what they can, with such helps as they can obtain, to fit themselves to perform some part —however small and trivial it may seem—of this work; and will then humbly and patiently labour in it, I am persuaded the next generation will have all done for them that we can reasonably wish in this respect. But if now they spend their strength in complaining for the "ought to be" which is not, they will surely have to pass their age in reflecting on the "might have been," the "could have been," which was not.

As therefore there is scarcely anything original in this essay, so the reader must not expect to be gratified by the discussion of any grand or new principles, or by any researches into the deep truths that lie at the foundation of Christian and social life. Perhaps they will be kind enough to believe that all these are either taken for granted as already known, or else omitted as irrelevant to the matter in hand. Society may possibly need upsetting, but our hospitals can be improved without this. The relations between men and women may require reversing, but it is not necessary to alter them to secure the better management of our workhouses. I have assumed that certain works are fit for gentlewomen to undertake, because no man of sense has as yet thought of

denying it in the abstract; and practical objections founded on special circumstances must be answered, if at all, by practical results. In the meantime, thanks mainly to the noiseless influence of one of the most sensible and most queenly-hearted women the world has yet been blessed with, conventional propriety, driven from her former moorings, has already drifted far ahead, and now sanctions much bolder advances in this direction than many of us are yet fit to make. But any one who is fit is at perfect liberty, both legally and socially, to make them.

Whilst, therefore, the whole of this essay has to do with outward matters, and deals chiefly with the surface of our lives: there is one portion, and that one of the most importance, of which I am conscious all that is my own is sadly superficial; I mean the section on Study. It is not, however, impossible that what is there said may suggest to some more competent teacher what is really wanted: till then I must ask my scholars to remember it is intended rather to show them what to aim at, than how to attain it.

Lastly, though writing on this subject, I cannot but fear its importance in relation to social improvement is just now very much exaggerated. Because our power to help has been too little used by us and too much overlooked by others, it is now spoken of by many writers as though it were to be the panacea for all our ills; and wherever negligence or imperfection is found in any of our

charitable or social institutions in connection with the uneducated, there a call is made for our help: people are apt to write as though ladies' work must be perfect, and not unfrequently, as though it were equally applicable to all cases. A writer in the "Christian Remembrancer" proposes that because the unruly young men, the "shacking" lads of the north, are in most parishes the most baffling portion of the clergyman's flock, they should be turned over to the gentle influence of daughters at home: and this on the strength of "English Hearts and Hands," as though we were all Miss Marshs; or as though there were no such people known as educated young men to take the part of Captain Vicars, and fulfil their natural relations to their uneducated contemporaries.

The consequence of any such exaggeration will inevitably be disappointment and reaction. It is well for us to remember, that were all done in this way, and by such agency as ours, which we can wish for, not only would many evils still remain quite untouched by it; but also negligence in doing our work, and disappointment in its results, would still exist, and that in abundance. All that could be reasonably expected is that a good deal would be done which is now left undone, and that what is now done would be effected in some respects in a better manner. There would still be too much disunion among the workers; still want of temper, want of sense, and want of

skill, would produce their customary fruits. People forget this; partly because of the hopefulness which a new resource naturally inspires; partly because in the accounts we have of such undertakings, the failures are omitted, the successes recorded. And partly because the principal attempts hitherto made, on the success of which the proposal to adopt such agency more generally has been grounded, have been made by such women as Mrs. Fry, Sarah Martin, Miss Carpenter, or the nurses of Scutari. And their work is pointed to with a triumphant, "See what gentlewomen can do!" It may be perfectly true that none but gentlewomen could have done, or ever will do, what these did: but it is not the less unfair to expect that average women will, as a body and continuously, reproduce such work as was the fruit of their great talents and strong devotion. The work done by average workers will scarcely be more, though it may very easily be less, than average work. And labour expended on those who have already sunk far below the ordinary level in health, in intellect, or in morals, must on the whole end oftener in failure than in success.

## CHAP. II.

### THE GENTLEWOMEN WHO ARE AT LEISURE.

THEIR COMPARATIVE CONDITION AND ITS ADVANTAGES.—THEIR WANT OF WORK.—WHAT IS WORK?—UNMARRIED GENTLEWOMEN HAVE OFTEN NO REAL WORK IN THEIR OWN FAMILIES.—HOW CAN THEY USE THEIR LIVES?—ANSWER GIVEN BY AN EDINBURGH REVIEWER.—BY THE "SATURDAY REVIEW."—BY THE AUTHOR OF "MORNING CLOUDS."—IN THE "CHRISTIAN REMEMBRANCER."—LITTLE HOME DUTIES.—WORK ANSWERING TO EDUCATION.—OUTWARD CHARACTER FORMED BY HABITS.—CONCLUSION "NOT WANTED" AT HOME.—THIS WANT OF SUFFICIENT WORK NOT UNIMPORTANT: UNCHRISTIAN, UNHEALTHY, UNHAPPY.—RESULTS: NERVOUSNESS, A MORBID CONSCIENCE, PERVERTED TALENTS.—EVILS OF AN EDUCATION ABOVE THEIR WORK.—TWO REMEDIES: TO TEACH LESS.—NOT PRACTICABLE.—TO GIVE WORK: THIS LIES WAITING FOR THEM.

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"There are persons to whom a religious life seems smooth and easy.

"There are circumstances which seem as a very hot-bed for the culture of religious principles: in which the difficulty appears to be, to escape being religious."—*Robertson's Sermons.*

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THOUGH the very frequent complaint, that unmarried women of independent means have nothing to do that is worth doing for its own sake, or at most so little that a very considerable portion of their time is as useless to themselves as it is unimportant to others — be really true: and though

we allow that such a life is a real unhappiness and a snare; yet were this the whole of the matter, it would scarcely be worth so much lamentation as has of late years been raised about it. For when we come to consider what degree of happiness is attainable by most classes of our fellow men; what temptation and difficulties they have to encounter from the circumstances in which they are placed: when, I say, we compare our own condition in these respects with that which falls to the lot of others, we shall probably find reason to think that we are on the whole in a happier condition than the greater portion of mankind; and that by the Providence of God and the care of our fellows, without the least merit or labour of our own.

We have had Christian teaching, and have been brought into a Christian profession: we have all the means of grace, almost in excess; God's word, and leisure to study it; the knowledge, and wisdom, and cultivation of all the ages lies open to us: the education of gentlewomen, educated society, pure and comfortable homes, the means of health, or all comforts in sickness, are ours. Many works of art, many lovely and wonderful scenes in nature are accessible to us for our pleasures: and all this with such a freedom from care and anxiety as falls to the lot of very few indeed except ourselves. These things are, for the most part, our common daily portion. No doubt wives and mothers have a much higher happiness—

they also have much sharper sorrows. But I do not know what we are, or what we have done, that we should claim the very happiest or highest places in this, God's lower school; or that we should thus fill the country with little books, for the most part expressive only of our wish to have them, our conviction we are fit for them, our complaints that we have not got them. Neither can I agree with those who claim as a matter of justice a wider sphere of action for women, on the ground that it is needful for the full development of women's powers. There is scarcely perhaps one man in ten thousand who finds room on earth for anything at all approaching to this. Nor is it a fit matter for us to judge of; it belongs to the Educator, not to the educated, to determine it. But if any one insist upon it as essential to their growth in perfection, it remains a grave question, whether a life of strong though passive submission may not be a better training for the highest part of a woman's nature than a life of abundant, though weaker activity.

But though it be not necessary for our own or for others' good that we should be happy, or great, it is necessary that we, in common with all Christians, should be faithful stewards of such talents as our Divine Master has seen fit to endow us with, for the use of the whole body of Christ. How very small those talents are, how imperceptible their use may be, makes no difference at all in this matter; since God has commanded us, and we

have vowed, to be followers of Him who was all His life about His Father's business; and since however little our power may be, He who gave it us permits us to use it in His own service. And if the existing state of society is such that we have no reasonably sufficient use for these gifts close at hand; if it has removed us from those whom we might help, and ought to help, and placed us where no one wants us, then we must go where the work is, and do it there. For the one thing needful for all men is that God's will be done and His kingdom spread: the one thing needful for each one of us is to fill her own part in that kingdom as faithfully as she can. "Though everything were done that is wanted, yet these persons ought repeatedly to be told how highly blameable they are for letting it be done without them."

Then what part of our Father's business is *our* work? what share are we taking in the work of the Lord's kingdom on earth? The general complaint is, we have nothing to do, no real work at all. What is real work?

It is work that is done for its own sake, if I may so speak, not done merely to pass the time. Children write, and sew, and read, and practise, for the use they may make of these things when they are grown up; they learn as children, that they may work as men and women. To go on all our lives doing these things, merely that we may be able to do them, is not working, it is a useless

pastime. Further, it must be, generally speaking, work that requires our best powers for its accomplishment, that is, if it is self-chosen. So digging is a very useful and respectable work; but a wrangler or medallist, who should voluntarily make it the main business of his life to dig his garden, would be a very idle man, not a real worker at all. And she who has received the education of a lady, and then spends the greater part of her life in needlework, is, so far, an idle useless woman. If this be true, it is a delusion to say "it does not matter what you do, if it is only stitching a wristband, so long as you do it as well as you possibly can." Jack Cade seems dimly to have known better than this, when he discovered that when Adam dug and Eve spun there were few gentlefolk in the world, and little need of them.

If, then, we have no employment for the principal portion of our time, but what we take up for the sake of passing it away, or none which we could not fulfil as well without being educated and without being gentlewomen, then we have no real work.

Now, that unmarried ladies have not this real work in their own families generally, might, I think, be proved, if not by their testimony who ought to know best, yet by the number of papers that have been written to relieve or to silence the complaint. Those who were really occupied would not have had the leisure to acquaint the

world so fully with the melancholy fact that they are tired of having nothing to do: or did any one ever meet with an essay written to prove that wives and mothers really have plenty to do? Here are the words of an Edinburgh reviewer, the more unexceptionable witness because he is merely using the fact he states as a passing illustration of a more important matter. He says, "unmarried women, and boys, have nothing to do," which is at once important, and open to doubt: and then he goes on to establish this proposition by setting down what their important duties are; and, first, "a grown-up daughter ought to nurse her mother if she is ill; or teach her little brother to read:" or, failing these — and it can hardly be supposed the normal condition of grown-up daughters to have mothers always ill, and brothers continually in pinafores, for the obliging purpose of giving them something "at once important and undoubted" to do, — he was forced to think of something else combining both these characteristics, and affording also a perpetual and general employment for unmarried gentlewomen. And the only things he could think of were "at any-rate to dress as well as she can, and to play on the pianoforte."

It is because I am fully convinced that this statement is in the main true, that I have ventured to write this book. For however you may swell the list of employments allotted by the consent and practice of society to grown-up daughters not

obliged to work for their own living, and residing in their parents' homes, every item will be but a variation of those here mentioned as their most important and unquestionable duties. And the sum is this: if there happens to be any use for them in their own homes, let them be useful; if not, let them live to dress well and play piano or forte. It is clear that if the grown-up daughters at home included in this second clause struck work to-morrow, the loss would be little to themselves, and less to any one else. At anyrate, they are at leisure, if there be any more important work for them to do.

But take the witness of those who have no sympathy with the complainers. Here is another statement of the unmarried woman's duties, such as is very commonly maintained, and generally allowed by people who know the world to be the common-sense, practical view of the question before us, though perhaps it is not often spoken out so well and plainly. "When people, especially young ladies, are convinced that to be agreeable, happy, and well-dressed, are duties; or rather part of the great Christian law of charity*, that nothing is a trifle which can increase the sunshine of home life, and that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing

* Surely these three duties had better shelter themselves under the direction somewhere given to young women, "to be discreet," than under the law of that charity which seeketh not her own.

well, a great step in the improvement of society will have been made, and we shall be much less likely to hear a repetition of that pathetic cry, 'the world is hollow, and my doll is stuffed with bran, and I want to go into a convent.' Let us not be misunderstood. We would not for a moment be disposed to underrate the services done to humanity by Sisters of Charity, and their collaborateurs amongst ourselves: on the contrary, we regard them with the deepest reverence and the most humble and heartfelt admiration. But we must not forget that their life is, and always must be, the exception and not the rule; that a woman's proper position is that of wife and mother, and that all the teaching of her life should tend to fit her for this place and position. If this is well and rightly done, there is no danger of its unfitting her for the other and exceptional work, should that be her portion after all, as it may very possibly be; for we are at present unlikely to see the accomplishment of the great wish that all good men should marry all good women."—*Saturday Review.*

That sounds very sensible: but let us omit the parenthetical remark about Sisters of Charity, and place the education advised for young ladies, and the station for which it is to prepare them, closer together. To say that after we are grown up, what we do and not what we are taught, our habits and not our theories, form "the teaching of our lives," our education, is surely to state an

obvious truism; and then it will follow that young ladies, who, from motives of the purest charity, spend their time in being agreeable, happy, and well dressed, are learning in the best way to be wives and mothers: for the hints given are too general to be practical, at least till they can settle whether what they are doing is worth doing at all, and whether sunshiny homes are best secured by moderate work or constant play. Now it is, to say the least, singular, if young ladies are really best trained to fulfil the two offices, which perhaps of all that could be named demand the most constant, secret self-postponement and self-forgetfulness, by habitually centring their cares and attentions on themselves in any shape. And I cannot but think the poor things might be somewhat roughly undeceived, if they expected their husbands to be satisfied when these three duties had been duly performed. Most of the husbands I have had the pleasure of knowing seem to consider it quite as much a part of their wives' duty to make their homes comfortable as themselves happy, and really care very little more for their wives being well dressed than they do for the dressing of their own dinners. On the whole, the employments St. Paul enjoined on young women are quite as likely as these to form wives and mothers whom the hearts of their husbands may safely trust in, and whose children shall rise up and call them blessed.

I cannot refrain from adding a passage from

the book itself — "Morning Clouds" — which is reviewed in the article quoted above; it is one quoted by the reviewer with great praise, and is addressed to young women. "Since by appearances we express ourselves to all around, it greatly concerns us that the expression should be habitually pleasing, and as truly fitted to our nature and disposition as careful taste can make it. To dress becomingly requires a good deal of thought, and a patient attention to all the niceties of propriety; need one say more than this to prove it a woman's right business?" Indeed, I should say it was necessary to say a good deal more, or a good deal less. Let us hope it does not absolutely require so very much, or it can scarcely be a Christian woman's business to be well dressed, in the face of those words of our Master, "Behold the lilies; they toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. *Therefore*, I say unto you, take *no* thought what ye shall put on." Is it possible to conceive that by these words the poor are bid to take no thought for being warmly and decently covered, whilst a great deal of thought and a patient attention to all the niceties of propriety is the rich woman's Christian business, in order that she may be dressed becomingly? Besides, the argument, to prove anything, proves too much: to write a proper despatch to an incensed emperor seems to require more of thought, and of patient attention to all the niceties of propriety, than is always at the

command of the Foreign Office: but of all employments, that of public acting must needs demand the utmost union of both: must we then be driven to admit there needs no more to be said on the subject to prove that these are woman's right business? And then as to "expressing ourselves:" before choosing for our right business in life, this laborious task of expressing our respective I's in an habitually pleasing and faithful manner, either by our dress or in any other way; were it not as well to be sure first that we are worth expressing; and then that there is nothing we know or could express more worthy the attention of all around us than ourselves? The reviewer's most true and too much needed warning against aiming at influence, is surely equally true of aiming at self expression, and we may justly say, "the only good and wholesome expression of ourselves is that which unconsciously proceeds from a really noble and virtuous character, and no other kind can ever be safely put before young people as a worthy object of endeavour." [Perhaps the kind reader will oblige me by noting here, that the authoress of "Morning Clouds," evidently a superior and thoughtful woman, in directing her melancholy pupils how to get rid of their heavy hours, is obliged to employ a good portion of them in dressing well; coming thus to the same conclusion with the Edinburgh reviewer as to the fact that they have nothing *more* important to occupy them.]

A writer in the "Christian Remembrancer," speaking on the same subject, says: "Every man finds the convenience of wife and daughters being able to leave what they are about, and take up his interests, do his errands, carry out his plans at a moment's notice. His home would not be a happier one if his own rule never of being interrupted were adopted by the ladies of his family, and there were no soul in the house whose train of thought might be disturbed, whose occupations might be broken in upon." Certainly such a home would be wretched to live in, though exceedingly curious and diverting to look in upon. There is, however, a wide difference between being at leisure to assist when wanted, which is our proper business, and being for ever at leisure to assist when nobody wants us, which is practically our life. A woman who could count these claims on her time and skill — each one so trifling as not to be worth a moment's notice, but altogether making up no trifling part of home rest and civilisation,—to be too insignificant to claim any, or even the whole of her time if needful, must either be very weak-minded or very ill-tempered. To be able to give at a moment's notice undivided attention and hearty interest to the various wants and plans of the family, from the schoolboy in his holidays to the greyhaired father in his leisure moments, is the natural business, as well as pleasure, of the grown-up daughters. But this writer takes for granted that they must have no important or

fixed engagements in order to do this: whereas all that is needed is that they should so arrange their other work as to be at hand when likely to be wanted, and to allow a sufficient margin and elasticity for possible extras. A man's work takes up a certain portion of his time absolutely, and he cannot bear being interrupted. A woman's work, unless it is for her livelihood, is so varied, and consists of such a number of details, that a little management, and the habit of mastering it, allows of postponement, change, and addition to any amount. And she rather likes being interrupted; at least it is good for her: her train of thought, if it went on all day, would interrupt itself by a bad headache: her unbroken occupation, of almost any kind, would long before evening lead her to imagine her back was broken. Moreover, the engagements of society are quite as fixed, and much less under her own control, than her private works of charity can be. She may to a great extent arrange her own time for the one, but not for parties or balls: whatever weight the objection has lies more against them.

Then I certainly never noticed that it is the woman who has nothing to do in particular, who has any time to spare, or spirits to undertake these little erratic and passing claims on her exertions. She who finds it a relief to think that it is a virtue to spend two or three hours a day in studying the moral and intellectual meanings of her toilette, naturally will get into a way of doing

everything in a very leisurely manner. She cannot understand the value of moments to an impatient brother, or of minutes to a busy man. And when she has done what they wanted, she is inclined to attach a degree of importance to the work not always proportionate with the gratitude felt; she is not in the habit of putting on a little more steam to bring the interruption into accordance with the rest of her day — it is all thrown off the rails; in fact, from want of use, she loses the needful energy. You may observe that boys always go for help to their busiest sister: the young cricketer who is bawling at the foot of the stairs for his to-be-trimmed hat, whilst the trap waits at the door and the father growls at the horse being kept, would have most likely found his hat all ready when he, lazy fellow as he is, came down in the middle of breakfast, if his sister's own occupations had been such as to make her time after the family dispersion a friend to be prized, not a foe to be killed. Then, if a man really needs some one in his family to be always at leisure, (and probably very few need it twice a week except at the regular hours of family meeting,) it really is preposterous that he should want his wife and his four daughters to be all "at leisure" for him at once. In all but an utterly helpless state of illness, or in delirium, one nurse at a time is all — I will not say that is necessary, but all for whose services there is room, the greater part of the day. One woman can surely do all

these things for father and brothers in ordinary health. But all these remarks show how little the most domestic men know or realise the state of their grown-up families. A man wants his glove mending in the morning; possibly two or three letters writing in the course of the day: when he comes home, he wants half an hour's attention whilst he arranges his ideas, or relieves himself from his excitement about some matter he is interested in, by talking it over: and because he does not find his womankind sitting in a row gazing on vacancy when he comes in, he says to himself, "How useful my girls are! they are always doing something, and always ready to attend to one: it's absurd their talking of wanting more to do; they do quite enough for me." But there are sixteen waking hours to be got rid of every day of our lives.

What fathers seem mostly to wish for their grown-up daughters are safety and innocence; what they forget to consider is, that there is no safety in vacancy and idleness, no innocence in conscious uselessness. They might remember an ancient proverb, "Work, and thou shalt be safe."

The same writer says in one page, that "when a father has given his daughter the education of a lady, it cannot be just to him or to society for her to spend her whole energies in the duties of a common hired attendant in a labourer's family;" by which little figure of speech is probably intended nursing a sick person in a labourer's family, as a

paid nurse might if one could be afforded or found; and this, he says, is throwing away the cultivation and position given her. But then a little before he asks, "is it quite fair to call the same employment, where it is pursued for bread, work, and when it is taken up for occupation, idleness? Rich and poor women alike ply their needles, and why is the sempstress called industrious, and the young lady who plods at her embroidery branded as idle? This idleness seems to mean no more than the preference of a lower to a higher class of labour, which circumstances may not bring within her reach." In which case there is surely no room for preference: but suppose circumstances put a labourer's family with illness, and without "the common hired attendant," within the plodding young lady's reach, would that be a higher or a lower class of employment? Now, granting that a lady does not make a full or right use of her advantages who merely does the work of a hired nurse, what shall we say of her devoting her whole energies to the work of a needlewoman? Nursing the sick in any family, be it peasant's or duke's, does afford some exercise for whatever she has acquired by her cultivation as a lady, *i. e.* other things being equal, the gentlewoman must always be the better nurse,—in presence of mind, quickness of thought or judgment, gentleness of touch, in readiness of sympathy, and in endurance. But embroidery affords no exercise at all for the cultivation and position her disappointed father has given her;

were she ten times a lady she would sew no better*; had she received no education at all she would embroider no worse, and would be more contented, more at ease in her conscience in embroidering her life away than she can be now. To get rid of time is fairly enough called idleness, whether it be done by smoking or by stitching.

Perhaps the real feeling that underlies many of these remonstrances against the present outcry for women's work, is what one writer expressed by saying, it is not by what women do, but by what they are, they fill their place in the world. It is hard for a woman to know what is meant by this, and I hardly know whether it is worth repeating or not. No doubt she does her work best who does it with such completeness and noiselessness that the want of it is never felt, and the effort never known; but so far as other people are concerned, every one is what his habits make him; and what sort of habits are likely to be formed by the easy and almost objectless life of relaxation which Society prescribes to her grown-up daughters, it is not difficult to say.

This, then, is what we mean, when we say there are many gentlewomen who have not, and who in their present circumstances cannot find, anything to do; viz. that what we do is not done because it is in itself of any particular use, nor because it pro-

* Needlework flourishes most in half civilised ages: the, to us, inimitable embroidery of India, China, and the Middle Ages attests this.

motes our own welfare, nor because it is a comfort or help to others; but for the most part we pursue our occupation because it takes up our time not unpleasantly. We read our history, if still young, not because it does us, or any one else, any particular good that we should know all about the Guises or the feudal system, but because it is a good deal more agreeable, and notoriously more virtuous, than looking out of the window. We work (when we have finished our histories) because we really shall want the work some time; and if we gave it to that poor widow to do — she wants work sadly enough, but she would have done it directly, and it will take us three weeks, and saves twenty-pence, and besides we must be doing something else if she did this. We can get through the day well enough, and pleasantly enough generally speaking: what with Mudie's books, and work, and drawing, and music, and talking, and with parties now and then,—only there are so many of us we cannot all go out so often as we wish. But it is too much to expect us to allow that this is a satisfactory healthy Christian life. No wonder those who have got so much to do they are almost overpowered by their work, do not understand the burden of it, and are angry or contemptuous at the helplessness of it; and do not consider that persons brought up in this luxurious manner are not likely to be able to help themselves out of it. Yet for all their ridicule it is true; and now that marriages in the "comfortable" classes are becoming possible

so much later in life than they used to be—in many cases scarcely possible at all—the number of these unoccupied women must increase, unless there be some occupation found which needs them as much as they need it.

"After all, it is a very limited class; how many are there left at thirty, we should like to know?" (*Sat. Rev.*) Now, I call this remark decidedly unkind. Suppose all unmarried gentlemen were forbidden to pursue any vocation for more than three hours a day; and when they complained of so arbitrary a law were coolly told, "After all, it is a very limited class that is oppressed, and probably by thirty few of them are left." But "after all" the wives and mothers of our upper classes do nearly all come from this very limited class, and were it only for their sakes the evil should be remedied. The interests of men and women, and of all classes, are so inseparably mixed up together that what injures the one must be at least equally hurtful to the other. Any education or habits that injured men, either morally or physically, would be as serious a misfortune to women as to themselves; and that life which is really hurtful to women must be hurtful also to their husbands, children, and brothers. Now, surely both inspired Scripture and human science teach us that, so far as our lives are objectless and our time useless, so far as our interests are frivolous and our work the mere pursuit of amusement, so far we must be weakened in mind and in body.

The Scripture tells us that the timid and little-gifted servant, who deemed it safer for himself not to use his talent at all than to run the risk of using it ill, is condemned as wicked and slothful, and his sentence is, that his only talent is taken away from him. *Not having used it he loses it*, and with it all possibility of being of any further service. Obviously this is no arbitrary judgment, but the inevitable consequence of such conduct on beings constituted as we are, and which will always follow just so far as the practice is pursued.

What does science say? "A leading peculiarity of human nature is the desire of action; the restless activity of mind which leads it to require some object on which its powers must be exercised, and without which it preys upon itself and becomes miserable. The frivolous occupations of the unoccupied are referable to this same principle. They arise, not from any interest which they really possess, but simply from the desire of mental excitement, of the felicity of having something to do. The pleasure of relaxation is known to those only who have regular and interesting employment. Continued relaxation soon becomes a weariness; and on this ground we may safely assert that the greatest degree of real enjoyment belongs, not to the luxurious men of wealth, but to the middle class of society, who, along with the comforts of life, have constant and important occupation."—*Dr. Abercrombie.*

"He showed me how surely these emotions, if

we cherish them independently of outward objects, do in their measure wear away and undermine the foundations of our being. The primary destination of man is to be active, and all the intervals of time in which he is obliged to rest he should employ in obtaining a clear knowledge of external things, which in the end will greatly lighten his labour. All which befalls us leaves traces behind it; all assists, unnoticed, in educating us. Yet it is dangerous to strive to take account of their effects; we should become either proud or idle, or cast down and fainthearted, and the one is as great a hindrance as the other. It is ever the safest for us to do the next thing that lies before us to be done."—*Wilhelm Meister.*

And what does experience say? "A moderate share of health is a rare thing among women of the leisurely classes."—*Dr. Moore.* It is true that he seems to attribute this to the educational excesses of boarding schools, but in fact it is a very small minority of these classes that go to schools at all. It will be said, there is no class of persons who live longer than these women; but living long is quite compatible with what they call in the midlands "enjoying" very poor health indeed.

And the actual result is much in accordance with these statements. Women have their full share of restless activity, mental and nervous, and in the case of these women this is still more excited and increased by the highly stimulating education through which they pass. When their education

is finished at eighteen, the majority, who do not marry at once, have no adequate outward object on which to exercise this restless activity; it "preys upon themselves," and renders them, if not miserable, certainly neither healthy nor happy. The nervous system gets over-excited and over-sensitive, so that though, when called by circumstances to any anxious work, she may control herself and do it thoroughly, she is left when the work is over exhausted and ill; she is compelled to confess to herself, "I can do it this time, but it takes too much out of me." Is it a natural or necessary thing that some months of anxious work, and not of overwork physically, should render our bravest gentlewomen invalids for life, — victims to tic, or unable for months to bear the least noise, scarcely even common daylight? Uneducated women will go through the same without wearing themselves out; they can nurse and toil night after night and week after week, and sleep quietly whenever they can lie down; they do not lie awake at such times starting at the slightest rustle of the night, or with anxious thoughts that seem to throb and quiver from head to foot. If education of necessity makes us thus weak, we were almost better without it; but it is not so, for educated men are physically stronger, more enduring, can bear fatigue better, and throw off anxiety with a more elastic spirit than the uneducated. "There is nothing so strengthening to the nervous system

as regular, moderate, and interesting employment."—*Dr. Moore.*

In a similar manner, the conscience having amongst the unmarried daughters of the leisurely classes "nothing that is important and open to doubt" to exercise its judgment on, but being, both by their education and by their over-excited sensitiveness, stimulated to great activity, occupies itself with endless scruples and questionings about hairbreadth degrees of right and wrong; and with probing minutely into motives and thoughts and feelings, that very likely never would have existed at all but for this most pernicious self-questioning; and then conscience undertakes the task of educating its own feelings, and mind, and will; and of cutting off a wish there, and adding a feeling here, and balancing little duties and little sins, till the little moralities of mint and anise drive out the weightier matters, judgment and truth, and all becomes one confusion of artificial self-consciousness. Is this the life-teaching which is to fit us for being wives and mothers, and which is not to unfit us for being Sisters of Charity, if such should be our portion?

"It is a cruel thing to educate people above their work." You will observe it is never said that these educated women are capable of nothing more useful than needlework, more interesting than dressing well, more honourable than being agreeable; just the contrary: their "proper vocation is to be married," that is, to fulfil the highest,

most responsible, and most difficult offices women can be called to; to be wives, mothers, and mistresses of families, in the most influential portion of the most influential nation of the world. But because they cannot be this at once, perhaps not for years, very possibly not at all, must all that thought, gentleness, and energy, which the statement that this is their proper vocation presupposes them to have, and which would certainly be exercised and increased if it was theirs, — be shut up, useless, to prey upon themselves? Professor Faraday says it is impossible to create or destroy force. "We may employ it; we may evoke it in one form by its consumption in another; we may hide it for a period, but we can neither create nor destroy it. We may cast it away, but where we dismiss it, there it will do its work." Now, the modern education of gentlewomen does evoke a considerable amount of force in those who are subjected to it; and modern society recognises little or no use for it but in marriage. What is the effect of these powers, which society will not employ, but cannot annihilate? Why, commonly, that the more gifts the woman has the greater plague they are to her, and the more perverted use she makes of them; whilst the less gifted and less powerful, to use Dr. Moore's words, "torment by whimsical nerves, peevish tempers, and indolent minds"; or more commonly, I believe, are tormented by a weary, life-long struggle in themselves against these; or seek the unsatisfactory and expensive

these things for father and brothers in ordinary health. But all these remarks show how little the most domestic men know or realise the state of their grown-up families. A man wants his glove mending in the morning; possibly two or three letters writing in the course of the day: when he comes home, he wants half an hour's attention whilst he arranges his ideas, or relieves himself from his excitement about some matter he is interested in, by talking it over: and because he does not find his womankind sitting in a row gazing on vacancy when he comes in, he says to himself, "How useful my girls are! they are always doing something, and always ready to attend to one: it's absurd their talking of wanting more to do; they do quite enough for me." But there are sixteen waking hours to be got rid of every day of our lives.

What fathers seem mostly to wish for their grown-up daughters are safety and innocence; what they forget to consider is, that there is no safety in vacancy and idleness, no innocence in conscious uselessness. They might remember an ancient proverb, "Work, and thou shalt be safe."

The same writer says in one page, that "when a father has given his daughter the education of a lady, it cannot be just to him or to society for her to spend her whole energies in the duties of a common hired attendant in a labourer's family;" by which little figure of speech is probably intended nursing a sick person in a labourer's family, as a

paid nurse might if one could be afforded or found; and this, he says, is throwing away the cultivation and position given her. But then a little before he asks, "is it quite fair to call the same employment, where it is pursued for bread, work, and when it is taken up for occupation, idleness? Rich and poor women alike ply their needles, and why is the sempstress called industrious, and the young lady who plods at her embroidery branded as idle? This idleness seems to mean no more than the preference of a lower to a higher class of labour, which circumstances may not bring within her reach." In which case there is surely no room for preference: but suppose circumstances put a labourer's family with illness, and without "the common hired attendant," within the plodding young lady's reach, would that be a higher or a lower class of employment? Now, granting that a lady does not make a full or right use of her advantages who merely does the work of a hired nurse, what shall we say of her devoting her whole energies to the work of a needlewoman? Nursing the sick in any family, be it peasant's or duke's, does afford some exercise for whatever she has acquired by her cultivation as a lady, *i. e.* other things being equal, the gentlewoman must always be the better nurse,—in presence of mind, quickness of thought or judgment, gentleness of touch, in readiness of sympathy, and in endurance. But embroidery affords no exercise at all for the cultivation and position her disappointed father has given her;

full of knowledge, but not sound thinkers nor strong workers. It is but reasonable to expect that the most sensitive and excitable sex should suffer the most from such excess. But it is not quite so easy to educate girls less; you cannot put the age back, and regulate the flood-tide of knowledge; nor can you diminish the eagerness of the young to know. Still less can you put its women back whilst its men go on "foremost in the ranks of time."

It is perhaps possible, though there seems little chance of it, that we may in time get our girls educated, instead of smothered in knowledge and accomplishments! Little chance, for this change must be effected by men; and instead of helping us out of this miscellaneous quagmire of knowledge, they seem to be madly plunging into it themselves, and are being taught almost as many things as we are. But a wiser and more real education will but fit them for higher work, and make such work more necessary for them than it is now. If you teach them less, they will have all the more time for the much more exciting work of learning for themselves; you cannot shut them out from that stimulus which educated modern society, with all its old treasures and new discoveries, must give to all who mix in it; once awaken the love of knowing in any class, and you can never say, So far thou shalt go and no further; every restraint you try to put upon it is but a fresh stimulant. And if you do not awaken it, the

age will. No young woman of average abilities will be satisfied who finds she has been arbitrarily shut out from being equal with her compeers; right or wrong, she will feel that this knowledge and these accomplishments are the road to that completeness which every woman longs for, and without which she cannot rest; she will feel herself humiliated by being in these respects inferior to other girls of her own station; she will count being kept inferior a bitter injustice. She may not be educated above her work, but she will count herself educated below her station, and others will agree with her.

The other remedy is to give them work answering to their education. That there is such work to be done, and where it is to be found, has been pointed out in the eloquent words of Mrs. Jameson, in the invitation of the lecturers to ladies to come to their help; in the deeds of the nurses of Scutari, and many similar deeds in our own country. That it is a fit work for young women,—fit to prepare them for being wives, and mothers, and mistresses, and Sisters of Charity—and a possible one for them, I hope to show.

## CHAP. III.

### THEIR EDUCATION.

THE EDUCATION OF GENTLEWOMEN AFTER SCHOOL.—AN INTERLUDE ON CHRISTIAN TRAINING.—EDUCATION INTENDED TO FIT US FOR OUR LIFE ON EARTH.—AMUSEMENTS, AND THEIR USE.—GROWN UP.

"I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

THE education of girls of the upper classes is generally supposed to end at seventeen or eighteen. But they are not then grown up: and another and more important part of education still lies before those who can afford the time for further cultivation, — that mental training which is obtained by their voluntary labour; and still more, the education insensibly derived from mixing in the society of educated men and women; by the help of which the narrow views and warm partisanships almost inseparable from a private education must be softened, and widened into fairness of judgment and gentleness of thought; by which the timid fear of ever doing some unknown wrong may be changed into self-respect, and this again be taught to express itself in respect for the

feelings, wishes, and opinions of all about them. And having undertaken to show some of the uses there are for gentlewomen, as such, in this world of ours, it is obviously necessary to start from the period when they may be presumed to be ladies, and not merely lady-like girls.

At seventeen or eighteen, then, having left the schoolroom, those girls who have been highly educated have, it seems to me, to recruit their health and nerves with a period of entire rest and change; not by an absolute cessation from reading — so violent a change might occasion a fatal collapse in some — but by very moderate English reading, by abundance of fresh air, by excursions among mountains or by seas; by healthy amusements, such as dancing and music, and pleasant, merry, intelligent society; with plenty of sleep (no more getting up at six), and warm, light, loose dressing. In a word, by all those wholesome advantages summed up in the well-known prescription of anxious mothers: "You know it is so important to give the girls the advantage of a season in London." Those who have happily escaped being highly educated, may very possibly have to forego this advantage also; but they may, notwithstanding, prove just as sensible and well informed, more healthy and vigorous in mind and body, and, if they really try, just as gentle and well mannered as if they had enjoyed both. But for these also, if I may prescribe, I should recommend much the same: they may study more

perhaps, but they should certainly have as much agreeable and good society, not of one exclusive clique alone—especially not of one religious clique alone; as much change of scene, good music, good paintings, good novels, parties, or balls, as can be had for them without extravagance, without weariness, with advantage to their health, and without their neglecting any obvious and imperative duties. If family circumstances, as they often will, prevent their having these, it should be made up to them by giving up something of the quiet for the mirth of home; at least their spirits need not be checked, because their parents cannot share them, with a "we have had enough of this nonsense; get something useful to do."

And is this, I hear some one say, the education of a Christian woman, a life fit for immortal beings? what if these unhappy girls died in the midst of it — perhaps in the very ball-room? —is this a preparation for heaven? is this renouncing the world?

There are a class of objectors with whom it is useless to combat. When natural reason is set aside as incompetent, not only to discover revealed spiritual truths, but also to determine the justice of men's interpretation of them and deductions from them, the only question which can be settled by discussion is which side will assert the longest and the loudest. This consideration, and the desire of brevity, will I trust excuse the dogmatic form in which the following observations are made.

It is certainly *not* "the education of a Christian woman"; but it may form a very useful part of that education; it is not "a life" at all we have been advocating; such a life would be impossible; for pleasure and recreation, pursued for a very few years, become the dreariest, dullest things any one can go through, the very contrary to what is here proposed. As to "satisfying an immortal spirit": if any one thinks to find *that* in any outward work or life—and it is of outward life only I proposed to speak—they had better close the book at once, and set themselves seriously to consider what is the satisfaction they need, and where the Scripture tells us it is to be found. But as to the time so spent, it will not be misspent. To educate a soul for heaven is the office of the Holy Spirit, to Whom alone it is possible: the business of parents, and the proper end of all human education, is not to prepare children for heaven, but for a life of earnest, real work, in God's service on earth. They who believe this world to be Satan's might well hesitate to prepare their children for taking any part at all in it; but they who confess that it belongs to Christ the King, cannot possibly excuse themselves from fulfilling the obvious duty of giving their children all attainable advantages for filling that place in it which God's Providence has assigned to them. But, practically, people of both persuasions do just the same thing; and they who think they believe every moment sinfully lost that is not a preparation for heaven, do not hesi-

tate to occupy a good portion of their children's time in learning French, calisthenics, and the use of the globes, which, so far as we can tell, will be of no possible use in the next world.

The only question then is, since we must prepare them for their probable position in society here, what acquisitions may be the most useful. And amongst these health, cheerful spirits, animal spirits if you will, (whatever you call them, as God thought it well to give them to the young it must be worth our while to preserve and cherish them,) and the power of expressing freely and gracefully the feelings or thoughts which it concerns those they are with to know, take a very foremost place. Without the two first, they must be feeble workers in their Father's vineyard; without the last, they will scarcely be able to take that place which is specially allotted to those of whom we speak.

Joy and sorrow are God's gifts, both are His instruments of education; He sends joy mostly to the young, and sorrow when He sees fit. Why should we not ask His blessing on both alike? why should we fear to die in the midst of the one more than in the other? If you tell your daughter "dancing is sinful," and "none but worldly people ever go to balls," she will be afraid to ask God's blessing before she goes to dance; if you tell her, "God has made you young and merry; enjoy your dance, and thank Him for it," she will not be afraid. Her own conscience will not make her so. When at six years old I first had a Bible of my own, I told my sister the

Psalms were very pretty, and I liked them best of all: she said, "Oh, but —— says that worldly people like reading the Psalms best!" Imagine the blow to my infantine self-satisfaction! in much alarm lest I should be that shocking unknown, a worldly person, I betook myself at once to liking the Proverbs best, and for some years was afraid of looking at the Psalms. Whilst middle-aged people have no hesitation in asking a blessing on their meal, though it is to be of mulligatawny and venison, it would be hard to give any satisfactory reason why younger persons may not rightly ask a blessing on the not less useful nor inferior refreshment that youth, and health, and bounding spirits find in an agreeable exercise, though it is to be enjoyed among the pretty and pleasant circumstances, the music and the graceful movements, of a ball-room.

However, the way in which these objects are to be obtained is not of so much consequence. If any have a better way of promoting them, by all means let them use the best. For girls who are to take a place in society, and brought up as girls now are, I think that the kind of amusements and the way of cultivation I have suggested are on the whole the best and safest: best, as generally likely to effect the object; safest, as not tending to make them feel themselves peculiar, and therefore self-conscious. There are many evils connected with these things: late hours, heated rooms, and unwholesome dressing, are almost inseparable

from some of them. In a simpler state of society such things could be had without them, and with much less care and trouble; but village greens will not quite do now. In a more perfectly civilised society greater room might be had for the individual tastes of all. As things are, the wisest, and I think, therefore, the most Christian course is to make as much of the good and leave out as much of the evil as we can. If it is a right thing to spend any time in amusement, then that which is the most real amusement, not to us, but to those who are to enjoy it, is the one to be sought for; a dull amusement is much worse than a waste of time. If educated society is necessary for the education of ladies, then to shut them up in the "happy home circle," or the still narrower one of a religious clique, is to deprive them of that necessary portion, and so far to unfit them for the station God has allotted to them. Whether Solomon was right in saying there is a time to laugh and a time to dance, may be a question; but those who say he was inspired ought to confess he meant what he said; and no doubt had he meant "sweetly subdued laughter and chastened mirth," he would have said so, and not deceived us. If people would only be content without forcing their children in spiritual hot-houses, and labouring so very earnestly to have them always a few years older in religious feelings and expressions than they really are; if they would consider their girls are living creatures who have to grow, and not dead

matter that must be poured or pressed into a mould, we might hope to have a less noisy, less feeble religious spirit, less morbid sensitiveness, less infallibility, less party zeal, and less of that unconscious acting out of an imaginary character and imaginary feelings, which too much marks young women professing godliness in the present day.

But as time rolls on and the girl becomes a woman, "a being breathing thoughtful breath, a traveller 'twixt life and death," she begins to feel that these things are merely means to an end, and not the end itself of her being sent into the world. She gets tired of improving herself, she ceases (at least if she has been saved from that over-excitement of society and gaiety which dissipates all thought and right feeling,) — she ceases to be in an ecstacy of delight at the prospect of a pleasant party. She wants, whether she clearly knows it or not, that "something" in preparation for which she has been improving herself so long, which will occupy her time and exercise her attainments, not as a means merely of spending her day, but as the reason of her having a day, the object of her day, and her own life. Something that can satisfy that desire to be of use to another, and to live for another, which our great Creator seems to have made a part of woman's nature when first He called her into being, to be a helpmeet for man. Very possibly she may crave this woman's work almost on her first release from school duties; the many present

discussions on the subject are likely to make her do so. It is never wise to interfere with these differences of character; perhaps it would be better if she were not grown up so soon; but if she is, it is better to be guided by the fact that is, than the theory that should be.

But when a woman is once grown up, her parents' work as educators cease: wise and dearest friends they may be, invaluable and most reverenced counsellors and guides; but educators and rulers they cease to be, by the appointment of God and by the laws of man. Henceforth she must be responsible for her own actions; God's will is her law, His Spirit her appointed Educator and Guide; she finds herself placed in such circumstances as God has appointed for her, and in submission to this expression of His will, it is her business so to use them as may be most for the service of His church on earth. To parents, therefore, we cease to speak.

# CHAP. IV.

## THEIR LIFE AND ITS USE.

HELPMEET FOR MAN. — HELP FOR THE UNGENTLE AND SUFFERING. — BISHOP BUTLER'S STATEMENT OF THE CLAIMS THESE HAVE UPON US. — OUR WANT OF WORK OWING TO OUR NEGLECT OF THIS HALF OF IT. — WHO CAN HELP THEM. — THE WAY OPENING. — SOCIETY AND HER SANCTION.

"If nature put not forth her power
About the opening of the flower,
Who is it that could live an hour?"

Now that a woman's life lies before you, what are you to do with it? Married or unmarried, in this respect it is the same, — a true womanly life is lived for others. Not for things; as a man's may be, who is engaged in any productive labour or trading; not for mind, as a studious man's may be; not for the increase of knowledge, for the discovery of truth, nor for art: not for men in their collective masses — nations, churches, colleges — but for others as individuals. Who are the persons for whom you are to live? "In the natural course of things, when a woman is grown up, her vocation is to be married." Perhaps it would be truer to say,

as it is God's will all men should be workers, so it is His will that all women should be helpers; and the highest and most complete way in which God permits us to be helpers, is by marriage, as wives and mothers. But, either from our over civilisation, or some other cause, there are a good many women who will not or cannot marry at all; and they who do, often marry so late in life that a not inconsiderable portion of their life would be absolutely lost, if this were the only way in which we could be helpers. We have seen that for the most part these unmarried women are not wanted in their parents' homes. Are there none then who really need our help? — none for whom we ought to live, who have not husbands and children, parents or brothers to live for? Does God, indeed, give us a single talent, without providing also room for its fullest exercise?

Now, there seems a peculiar fitness in this: that at the time when a large body of educated women are at leisure from all nearer claims on their time and powers; so great a mass of the uneducated class, of women especially, are standing in such pressing need of help, teaching, and guidance, that those who best know their wants and temptations all but despair of the possibility of their being helped at all:—see in their condition, not a sphere where there is still room for ladies to add pleasure to pleasant lives, by being happy, agreeable, and well-dressed; but an unmeasured abyss of suffering and sin, where it seems as though all the high-

est efforts of all Christian men and women must be lost through their utter inadequacy.

That helping these is as much our natural and proper work as adding sunshine to our own homes, is directly asserted by Bishop Butler. Indeed, he does not hesitate to say, that to add pleasure to the lives of the comparatively prosperous and happy with whom we live, is not even the principal use we ought to make of the power God has given us to help others. And no one can suspect him of a sentimental preference of out-of-the-way duties to near ones. He says, "pain and sorrow and misery, as such, *have a right* to our assistance." "Liberality and bounty are exceedingly commendable, and a particular distinction in such a world as this, where men set themselves to contract their hearts, and close it to all interests but their own. It is by no means to be opposed to mercy, but always accompanies it; the distinction between them is only that the former leads our thoughts to a more promiscuous distribution of favours to those who are not as well as those who are necessitous; whereas the object of compassion is misery. But in the comparison, and where there is not a possibility of both, mercy is to have the preference. The affection of compassion manifestly leads us to this preference. Thus to relieve the indigent and distressed; to single out the unhappy, from whom can be expected no returns, either of present entertainment or future service, for the objects of our

favours; to esteem a man's being friendless as a recommendation; dejection and incapacity for struggling through the world, as a motive for assisting him; in a word, to consider those circumstances of disadvantage which are usually thought a sufficient reason for neglect and overlooking a person, as a motive for helping him forward; this is the course of benevolence which compassion marks out and directs us to; this is that humanity which is so peculiarly becoming our nature and circumstances in this world."

Now, if it be true that pain, sorrow, and misery have a right to our help; if we ought to give the preference, when we cannot assist both the prosperous, amongst whom our lot is cast, and the poor and suffering, to the latter and not to the former; does it not seem at least probable that our want of occupation—our want of an object for which to live—is owing to our having set aside the work designed for us as our principal duty; and chosen to acknowledge no claim upon our care but that lesser one which brings an immediate return of comfort and good-will to ourselves. At least that we have made the less important of the two our rule of duty, and regarded the more important as merely a graceful appendage of our station, highly becoming for us to attend to when at leisure from the claims of society, but not at all binding upon us as a duty which should in any measure direct our course of life.

For consider with each other, when all you can do for the comfort and happiness of your own family is sufficiently attended to, how much time have you left in the day, in the week. If one sister at home were to undertake all that two or three or four now divide among them, would it be more than were wise for her to attempt? One unmarried daughter in moderate health is generally competent for all these: then if the others *were* wanted elsewhere, they might be away from home by turns for the greater part of the year, assembling again for the usual family gatherings, without one family duty being neglected. In fact this is a thing continually done, and no one has a word to say against it, if the absent daughter is giving pleasure and comfort to the comparatively prosperous and fortunate; it is only when she has gone to help the friendless and indigent that any outcry about home ties is made. And yet I am persuaded that the home duties would be better fulfilled, — with more cheerfulness and spirit, with a more watchful care, — in such a family, than when all stay at home on the supposition they are all attending to them: half or quarter work is never so well done, in the long run, as full work. Nor would the happiness of such a home be diminished to mothers, fathers, or brothers: to be patient and good-tempered, and to keep our private troubles from troubling others, is our duty, and is practicable under much greater depression than we are

called to endure; but to be in really good spirits from twenty to fifty, without any interesting employment, is simply impossible.

I have put this case first, because the expense of a daughter living thus away from home, though not much, (it is about fifty pounds a year,) would often be more than her living at home occasions; and where there is nothing to spare without entrenching on home comforts, it would be wrong to ask the sacrifice. We must therefore look to those of ampler means, and to those who have no home ties left, to carry on that work which can only be done where the poor are congregated together, away from the homes of the rich and respectable; and trust that work which lies near, or in our own homes —and there is still a good deal to be found there— to those who cannot leave them. Besides, there are many whose homes are necessarily in those great towns where the work we speak of mostly lies. Gentlewomen of small independent means, members of the families of professional men, of clergymen, and of men in trade not yet rich enough to have a villa out of town; with many who are themselves engaged in it, but who, having the will, have time to do good among their poorer neighbours. And if any of our hopes can be realised, and it can be made possible for gentlewomen to live and labour amongst these denser masses of the poor, the help of the last mentioned would be invaluable, not only from their greater experience amongst the poor, and their practical knowledge of

economy, and of the common things we should have to teach, but also because it is through them we can hope to reach effectually that large class of women, of the smaller retail shops, and the richer mechanics, who being above Government and Sunday schools, have had hitherto little teaching and no education, and who too often, uniting the low morality of the poor, and the frivolity of the idle rich, to a vulgarity that seems peculiarly their own, form an almost insuperable barrier to the improvement of a very considerable class of domestic servants. It is almost always the class just above us, into which we hope some day to rise, that gives the tone to our own. It is when each class will cease to struggle upwards, and strive instead to help up those next to them, to their own level, then, and it is to be feared not till then, our outcasts may be recovered.

And these workers themselves, who in their solitary efforts to do good are often so depressed by the sight of evils they cannot resist, and sufferings they cannot relieve, will it not cheer them and strengthen their hands, to be joined by those who, whilst they profit by their experience, can supply them with the ampler means they have longed for? Will it not be a comfort to many an unknown sister of charity, who, cultivated by true religion, is in truth as refined and gentle as any lady in the land, to find herself associated with those who, by their natural advantages of education, are in this one respect her equals, but who, if

ruled by the arbitrary etiquette of society, could never have known her, or aided in carrying out her plans.

Lastly, and most entirely, there are all those gentlewomen who, having lost their parents' homes, and having no other to claim their care, are free to choose their plan of life for themselves. Very many of them do employ themselves in various works of kindness, but not very many have as yet considered it their duty to take these, or indeed anything, as the business of their lives. They ask not, where might I be of the most use? but consider where the society will prove most agreeable to their disposition, where their friends are most accessible; the air most healthy, the preaching such as they like, the church service best performed, the shops satisfactory, and the expense of living in a good deal of comfort not above their means. In such places they congregate; and these essential points being secured, they find a real pleasure in doing what they conveniently can for the few poor and ignorant in their immediate neighbourhood, and in subscribing money for the purchase of Christian truth and morality for those distant places where, they read with shuddering, such things are unknown. What else can they do who have thus to begin life for themselves at forty or fifty years of age, after spending those years in luxurious homes, where their most important Christian duty has been to be agreeable, well dressed, and piano playing, their

most industrious employment an inferior kind of embroidery?

But, henceforth, we alone shall be to blame if we allow our lives to be of so little use. Not only is there much to be done which we could do, but some are already engaged in doing it, and the way is being opened for all who resolve to undertake it. I think no one but ourselves made, or could make it a fact, that trivial pastimes were all we had. Society indeed said, and still perhaps is inclined to say, that the correct thing for her maidens is to be at home or abroad with their chaperones until they are married; but she has long been incommoded by their numbers, and now, if any of them desert her ranks, she does not even stigmatise them as peculiar; at most she only calls them exceptions; and it does not require any very unfeminine boldness to risk being called an exception.

In her domain whatever is is right: her hair would have stood on end indeed twenty years ago at the mere notion of *her* ladies going to nurse private soldiers in very dirty hospitals. And had not all Britain been driven wild at the time with astonishment and grief at the sudden discovery that not all her power or wealth could provide what just then she most of all desired, loving care and nursing for her brave and suffering soldiers; and had we not had a Queen whose approbation of anything as truly feminine it would be too absurd for any one to call in question—had it not been for these things, I firmly believe Society would have

excommunicated those ladies outright, or at least have tabooed them as "most extraordinary—well-meaning people no doubt, but very undesirable, my dears." When there is nothing really wrong or unsafe, it is only the first step that costs Society's approval; success in that step wins its applause, and those noble women to whom we owe more for the prudence which secured success than for the courage which first undertook the work, have so carried that first step by storm, that our smaller and more general advances are now sheltered from her frown, let us hope from her notice.

And if in future times, though we scarcely expect such serious results, the givers of parties shall have to take as much pain to secure the proper proportion of dancing and singing young ladies, as now to enlist a sufficient supply of gentlemen: if at balls, young Guardsmen, instead of considering through their eye-glasses which of a dozen pretty girls is most worthy of being solicited to dance with them, shall have to be early in their application, and agreeable in their conversation, in order to be secure of having any partners at all; if at dinner parties under-graduates and young barristers have to follow *en masse*, instead of being followed by the youngest daughter with her cousins from the rectory; yet it is not to be doubted they will all survive the change, may indeed be compensated for it by its beneficial effects on their own demeanour. In the meantime, whilst it would be both wrong and very

silly for us to run against the general rules or to neglect the real requirements of society; whilst we benefit by its good sense and practical experience, which though both fallible and shallow, certainly much exceed our own; we cannot take its wisdom for the law of our lives, nor its little code of morals for the measure of our Christian service.

## CHAP. V.

### THEIR QUALIFICATIONS.

THE USE OF GIFTS. — RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEM. — WHAT GIFTS HAVE WE? — POWER OF SYMPATHISING. — UNPAID LABOURERS. — TIME TO LEARN AND TO TEACH. — STATION IN LIFE.

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"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Light."

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EVERY talent and capacity we have is the gift of God, given that we may improve and cultivate it, by using it in the service of Christ for the help of our fellows, and not for our own pleasure or credit. The fact of our having any such talent, in any measure, is itself evidence that we ought to use it as circumstances admit, (though no proof that any particular way of using it is fit or justifiable;) and that we are responsible for the way in which we cultivate it, and the end for which we use it. It is only by so using them for others, not for ourselves, that they can become greater, or bring any real good or happiness to ourselves; and here, as it seems to me, the advocates for woman's development have erred, setting before us our own completion as our proper object, and self-training by work as

the way: forgetting that it would be far easier for us to add a cubit to our bodily stature than thus to make our whole nature, body, soul, and spirit, grow into harmonious perfection by any care of our own. Our Lord's example is set before us to copy, and His object was not self-perfection, but to glorify His Father on earth, and His way to it was finishing the work that was given Him to do.

It is true our present business is not to unlock the whole riddle of society or of life, but to find some sure principle that will guide us to the right fulfilment of our own little part in it, and that only so far as concerns our outward and social life. But when we begin to consider what powers and qualifications we have for helping others, I know nothing that can save us on the one hand from making their cultivation our object, intoxicated by the notion of what they might become; or on the other, neglecting to use them through despair at their actual impotency, except keeping steadily before our minds by whom and for whom they were entrusted to us, the account we must give of our stewardship, the living Power that is ever with us to make them effectual for His purposes. It has been said this is so solemn a view of the trifling acts of our lives as to be quite unreal and impracticable; but if life be a serious thing, and given us for some serious purpose, it must somehow or other be possible for us to live accordingly: to know our responsibility does not increase it; to be ignorant of it, can never diminish it; and we are

not responsible for success, but very much so for trying to succeed. We have no choice at all in the matter; and surely therefore it must be safer to consider what our position is, and not to deny it merely because we are afraid of it, and do not like it. What gifts, then, have we that might be applied to the assistance of the ignorant, the suffering, the indigent?

We have time, leisure, to devote to their help. We have received so much of moral training, that we have a higher moral standard and a truer sense of right and wrong; we have some knowledge of the great Christian facts, and more of what a Christian life should be than many of those we wish to help can have. We either know something of those "common things" which they most need to learn, or at least we have the means of readily attaining the knowledge. Then we have been used to better and purer pleasures than they have had, and we could procure some such for them. Our station in life gives us the power of gaining their friendly attention; and we have received the education of gentlewomen.

I suppose if we had to transmigrate into other bodies, and were doomed to leave all our present gifts behind us but one, we should all agree in choosing still to be ladies. But whilst this is that part of ourselves we are the most pleased with, we are very apt to think that, like reading and writing, it came to us by nature; we are ready to take for granted that we have it because it belongs to our

position and education; and so forget that of all the qualifications given us, it is the one which admits of an almost infinite number of degrees, can be improved almost unlimitedly, can be diminished or even lost with the most ease, and is, in fact, the special gift of God which marks out our peculiar work; which is designed to be the main source of whatever ability we have to be really helpful; it is the one peculiar difference which, if "cancelled in the world of sense, might make one beam the less intense."

The most obvious way in which this affects our work for others, is through the greater power of sympathy—of feeling truly with others—which it gives. Many say the poor can best sympathise with the poor; so far as I have been able to judge, I have not found it to be so. It is not that the kindness is wanting so much as the knowledge of what the sufferer needs, and how that want must be met; practical difficulties, as in wages and housekeeping, they understand best; but is a poor mother broken-hearted for the death of a child?—she will be told only, what a blessing it is she is gone; is a father wretched because his son has gone to prison, or his daughter been ruined?—the usual consolation offered is exclaiming over his hopeless badness, or, "I always said no good would come of bringing her up so high." And on general grounds it seems impossible that they should be able to feel with others as educated persons can. Really to sympathise in cases which do not personally affect our-

selves requires an habitual attention to, and observation of, all the signs of feeling,—the power of putting ourselves in their places, and judging through their medium; and the power of expressing truly our own feelings in harmony with theirs. But accurate observation, a knowledge of the nature of human feeling and passion, and the power of true expression, is only gained by cultivation. We almost always seek for sympathy ourselves from those who are somewhat above us.

In Mr. Robertson's sermon on the sympathy of Christ, is the following remarkable passage. "He who would sympathise must be content to be tried and tempted. There is a hard and boisterous rudeness in our hearts by nature which requires to be softened down. We pass by suffering gaily, carelessly, not in cruelty, but unfeelingly, just because we do not know what suffering is. We wound men by our looks and our abrupt expressions without intending it, because we have not been taught the delicacy, the tact, and the gentleness which can only be learnt by the wounding of our own sensibilities. There is a haughty feeling of uprightness which has never been on the verge of fall, that requires humbling. Remember it is being tempted in all points, yet without sin, that makes sympathy real, manly, perfect, instead of a mere sentimental tenderness. Sin will teach you to *feel* for trials; it will not enable you to judge them, to be merciful to them, nor to help them in time of need with any certainty." We may see

from this both the advantages which gentlewomen have above men in this respect, and when they will be most likely to fail. The "hard and boisterous rudeness" is naturally less in women, and is softened down both by their education and by that continual course of trivial physical sufferings to which most are subject; for probably few women "of the leisurely classes" pass half a year without a good deal of uneasiness, if not actual pain, from one cause or another, weakness or what not. Their greater sensitiveness in part supplies the tact and gentleness which severe discipline must give to others. The weakness which needs continual protection, the sense of constant failure in the most trifling duties, and the temptations to those little sins which alone are possible to them, must prevent or check that haughty feeling of uprightness which only a sense of strength can give. And though the absence of the like temptations may prevent their entering into the case of the fallen, yet at least they have been saved from those open sins which would have precluded their aiding the sinful. It seems, therefore, that whilst a strong and good man, so tried and so pure in trial, will be best able to give effectual sympathy and help to those who have stumbled and fallen in the path of life, yet there will always be many more women able to give some measure of sympathy and comfort than there can be of men. And whilst we must be always on our guard against over much condemning sins to which we

were never tempted, on the one hand, and sentimental tenderness toward them on the other, yet the risk of falling into these mistakes will not excuse, and must not persuade, us to neglect this means of helping those less fortunately circumstanced than we have been. So far as we have the power, we owe it to His appointment and providing care, Who fixed our lot in the safe and pleasant places of the world: free from all those outward conditions which tend to harden the heart, and roughen the temper, and darken the conscience.

It is also an advantage that we are able to be unpaid labourers. Not that this gives us the least right to direct the poor, nor makes it in any way their duty to listen to us. Indeed, if there is not enough of a manly spirit left among them to take kindness and good sense, ignorance and assumption, at something like their true value, we shall do almost as much harm as good by mixing with them. But many of them have known so little disinterested kindness that they are ready to think there must be some wrong or bye motive for any kindness offered them. And that which is in any way paid for, they either receive as their right, or reject as mercenary; many count it a sufficient reason why they should not heed a word a minister says to them, that "he's paid for talking so!" In one parish a Roman Catholic priest came to visit for the avowed purpose of proselytising: the clergyman, not thinking it

well to interrupt his own regular ministerial work, engaged a scripture reader, well acquainted with the Roman Catholic doctrines as taught in England, to give those families the priest visited the other side of the question, and to show them how to answer his arguments. Almost immediately several families began to attend the Roman Catholic chapel, two miles distant, and professed to join them: on being asked why they did so, they said, "the priest comes to see us for nothing, but the other chap is paid for it." Those who come amongst them unofficially have this advantage at the outset,—their work is a visible sign of a kindly feeling, to those who can understand no other, and it may therefore awaken more readily kindly feelings in them. And to call out one kind feeling in a heart where little but hard thoughts and bitterness have been cultivated, to infuse some trust in the possibility of unselfish kindness where only selfishness and evil have been looked for, is a great gain and a step towards peace and faith; if only they who have roused it take heed not to chill it again by the least appearance of fickleness and inconstancy.

Then we have both time and opportunity for acquiring the information and learning the work these women need to be taught. We have been used to learn, and so it is an easier thing for us to acquire the special knowledge needed for any one branch of the work before us, than it can be for women of the class from which nurses, matrons,

&c. are, and I trust always will be, chosen. The matron of a workhouse, for instance, may know her own business thoroughly; but she has a good deal too much to do to attend to any other work, — much less to learn any other for the purpose of teaching the poor women to be good nurses, or the girls to be good servants. That general knowledge, and the power of application and of order, which makes it a short and easy matter to learn the practical details of any one kind of labour, is the fruit of education, and possessed only by educated persons.

Though the qualities and habits that constitute the only real claim any one can have to the name of gentleman or gentlewoman, may be all so used as to benefit the uneducated very greatly, yet with the working men in many places, the fact of any one possessing that name is rather a bar to their good-will than a help to getting access to them: in this respect one part of the country differs greatly from another. With the middle classes it is never so; and yet these are the very persons whom it is hardest for clergymen to get at, and of whom we know probably the least: our station in life would give us many advantages in intercourse with them, if we only knew how to use them rightly. A farmer's wife may care little for the education of her daughters herself, may be totally ignorant of what "education" is; but she will seldom be insensible to the advantage of having them taught by her landlord's daughter. So it is

also with many of the tradesmen; they think it bad for their children to associate with the poor in the Government and Sunday schools, yet will not pay for a good school of a higher class—if indeed they could judge which are good, or if there were any such within their reach: but they would be quite alive to the advantages of having their daughters taught by ladies. And so this gap in our system of education might be filled up, till a better trained generation shall arise to demand and obtain some permanent way of obtaining real education for their children. And to aid some of them to become really more ladylike, would be quite as much in our power, quite as agreeable, and a good deal more gentle, than laughing at their affectation of a character to which their claims seem to us dubious. There are also many young women in these classes who have both time and ability to do much good amongst a very large and very grievously tempted class of servants, whom we can scarcely reach, the farm boys and maid-servants of the country, the girls of all-work in our towns; but who do not know how, or who think it useless, to do anything for such low people. We shall never do much for these servants if we do not contrive to procure for their mistresses a sensible Christian education.

I should be sorry to overrate the power entrusted to educated gentlewomen to raise the tone of morality, to cheer the hearts, to soften the manners, and strengthen the hands, of their less instructed,

more tempted sisters, by friendly intercourse, fellow-feeling, and teaching. But any one who knows the difference between the cottage, the mother of which has been a trusted servant, trained in the well-regulated household of a lady, and that where the mother, just as industrious and honest, used to work in a factory or in a rough farm service perhaps — a difference at least as great in essential things as that between the drawing-room of the highest gentleman and the parlour of an intelligent tradesman—will bear me out in saying, such a power does exist and may be exerted for great good.

It is hardly necessary to refer for proof of this to the moral influence of the nurses over our soldiers, or of "our lady" over the rough navvies in "Hearts and Hands;" it may be said these were the fruits of unusual abilities. The gifts I have named are in some measure common to us all; if they are wilfully misused or neglected, we lay on ourselves the burden of the evils they might have stayed, of the good they might have fostered, of the comfort they have not given.

# CHAP. VI.

## THE WOMEN WHO ARE UNEDUCATED, AND WHERE THEY ARE TO BE FOUND.

WHO NEED OUR HELP.—THEIR NUMBERS: IN PRISON, IN WORKHOUSES. — EMIGRANTS. — IN HOSPITALS, IN REFUGES. — CONDITION OF THE REST.

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"Go to the jail, the penitentiary, the penal colony; you will not find the wealthy there, nor the noble, nor those guarded by the fences of social life; but the poor, and the uneducated, and the frail, and the defenceless."

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THE class of whom we have to speak is, strictly speaking, that very large and probably increasing mass of people who are below the "working men," and do not support themselves by their own labour. But much that is true of the one class is also, in a measure, true of the other: and whether by a temporary loss of work, by sickness, or by sin, these are so perpetually falling into the condition of the poor, that no practical purpose would be answered by dividing them; except that we may the better bear in mind that our first object must be to try to keep the working women from falling amongst the poor, and our second to restore as many as we

can of the poor to the working class: and lastly, that we must enlist not only the middle classes, but the working men and women, in the work of restoration, before any effectual change will be produced.

I speak of the women only, partly because no one can say it is not, in theory at least, a woman's proper business to help and teach women; chiefly because I wish to show how much they need the aid of advantages which we have had, and ought therefore to be able to impart. The men have learnt in some sort to do men's work; for if they had not they must have died; but the women have to a very great extent been without any chance of learning what is specially woman's work. And therefore, though it were true we could in some respects teach the boys and men more easily than gentlemen can, yet I am persuaded we should do very much more for them by helping their mothers, wives, and sisters to fulfil the duties of those relations as women should, than by any direct "womanly influence" of our own upon them.

At the last census the population in England and Wales was 17,922,760: 8,762,588 men; 9,160,180 women. Allowing half the population to be under twenty, and half of that number to be between the ages of five and fifteen, there would be 4,480,192 children to be educated; of these about 600,000 are said to be above the working classes, and that 100,000 may be taken off for the upper class, whose education is already provided

for. If the same proportion holds good for the whole population, there will be about 15,222,000 of the manual working class: about 7,500,000 men, and 7,700,000 women: 2,000,000 of the middle, and 600,000 of the upper ranks. These numbers are very roughly calculated, and are only given as a kind of guide to an unexaggerated view of the numbers that follow.

Of these 7,700,000 women 33,363 were committed to prison, or in it, in 1856; 819 being in prisons used for penal servitude. In the same year 1990 children under twelve, and 11,991 between twelve and sixteen, were in prison; 13,981 altogether under sixteen, of whom only 79 girls and 455 boys were admitted to reformatory schools; leaving 13,457 under sixteen, who were either already without a character, or else lost it by being sent to prison; and the greater part of whom, on coming out, would be cast out among our rogues, without any very effectual means having been used to give them even a chance of doing better. Now, these women and children must have needed a good deal doing for them besides what could be done by sending them to the best of prisons. Forty thousand souls in all sent out of prisons as one year's contribution to the Pariah class, seems a considerable number. Both women and children must greatly need, amongst other things, such help as we could give them, if we could only work together whilst the question of better but more expensive public reformatories is

being settled. And some things they must surely need, which no one could give them so well as educated Christian women.

In the same year 15,574 women, described as able-bodied, received in-door parish-relief, were for a longer or shorter time inmates of our workhouses. It would take too long to go into the state of these workhouses, and it would be merely repeating what can be found much better detailed in the "Englishwoman's Journal," and the papers on this subject published in 1857, 8, 9, in the "Journal of Social Science." But all who are in the workhouse are there from poverty, affliction, or sin; let us consider of whom their inmates consist. First, there are the old people, lonely, unoccupied, mostly very ignorant: all destitute of the kindly care and love that old age should receive from children and relations: all the consolations that these can have, might be offered to them by us. Next, there are the poor industrious families forced into the house for a time by want of work, deserted wives, widowers sacrificing their own peace and comfort to obtain some sort of care for their motherless infants: those are the times when men get desperate, when they begin to feel indeed "every man for himself," but see no God for them all: the mad, reckless selfishness that takes possession of these temporary inmates of a crowded workhouse, seems at times more like a positive possession by the Evil Spirit, than any merely human passion. However little comfort we can

give to them, yet in such loneliness and trouble the least is something; and human sympathy and divine hope are all that can be offered to them by any one. Then there are the 37,814 children, of whom 20,108 were under ten, and 18,700 were girls, who received instruction in workhouses or other schools at the cost of the poor-rates. What these union schools are, and what they need to make them tolerably efficient, you will find in the papers before referred to. Their teachers, if they were the very best, have not the time in any sense to supply the place of parents to the large numbers thus regimented together. What sort of women can we reasonably expect girls to become, whose only notion of a home is a collection of some hundred girls, a mistress, and a teacher? Growing up without fathers or mothers to obey and love, without brothers, without homes, almost without any room for natural affection; without any one to exercise a permanent restraint or influence over them; launched at fourteen or fifteen to take care of themselves through the world — they need some one to look up to and love; they need personal, individual teaching, both religious and industrial; they need womanly teaching. Unquestionably these need us.

Then there are the fallen, — young women driven to the workhouse for refuge in the time of their need. These are a hard class to deal with; and being all herded together, and living a public life when they should be hidden from scorn

and their own shame in private homes with their mothers, what can they do but harden each other? And yet, if whilst suffering the first-fruits of their sin, and softened by the first love of a mother, they *could* have a wise and gentle friend to speak with; if they were not forced always to brazen out their disgrace to escape the coarse ridicule of their companions, ever ready to hiss down the first sign of repentance; if they could find they were not shut out from the hearts of good women to the company of the bad; if they could have some hope given them, that on returning again to the world they would not be left altogether to themselves, or be driven to sin again by sheer want; if any prospect of being able fairly to support themselves and their child, and of regaining their character, could be set before them, then repentance, humanly speaking, would be made a possible thing for them. But you will see at once how much continual and individual care must be given here; how impossible it is for the most devoted chaplain to give it; how impossible that any of the workhouse officials should give it; how much there is for us to try to do for them.

In the same year 10,282 unmarried women from the United Kingdom were assisted by the Commissioners of Emigration to go to the Australian colonies alone: probably 5000 more would not be too much to add as emigrants to our other colonies. When we read how much Mrs. Chisholm did for such women in one Australian colony, the question

comes, what would they have done without her? and then we must ask, is there not room for a few more Mrs. Chisholms? Supposing that one lady could protect and find safe situations for 500 every year (which supposes a good many of that number not to need much help), thirty Mrs. Chisholms must be wanted in our colonies.

Then there are our hospitals, and the hospital nurses: it is now pretty generally confessed that to be complete our hospitals should be superintended and their nurses trained by gentlewomen. Probably this may be more true of the great metropolitan than of the country hospitals, whose more manageable size, fuller staff of officers, and greater space, save them from many of the evils related of those. Still, where there is illness and suffering, there is something for us to do. What the average number of patients in our hospitals may be, I cannot learn. The King's College Hospital, containing 140 beds, is managed by eight ladies, who take charge of the wards in rotation, and by thirty-two trained nurses. Another hospital applied to these ladies for superintendents and nurses, but they were obliged to refuse, their numbers not being sufficient for the work they already have.

Then there are the homes, houses of refuge, penitentiaries—whatever name they take; how many more of them are needed? Still more, how many ladies are needed to receive those who have struggled against their evil habits and temptations,

through these refuges, and must now be sent out again into the world as servants? Can any one be too truly gentle, refined, and pure — can any one have her mind too much cultivated by Christian love, too much under her own control, for this work? If not, and if the utmost we can attain of all these gifts proves too little in most cases to recover these unfortunate women, then it falls to our class in a special, though by no means in an exclusive, manner to do it. But how are we to be prepared for undertaking it? Say that thirty or thirty-five is the age when we might be expected to be fit for it—will such a life as society imposes on young unmarried women have prepared us for it? Certainly not: but yet such a life as would prepare women really to be wise and gentle wives and mothers would equally prepare them for this —and that is a life of thoughtful deeds of love— not one of self-expression, needlework, or being agreeable.

So we know where to find about 700,000 of our sisters. The mass of 7,000,000 remains to be spoken of. 40,900 employed in factories: how many domestic servants I have failed to ascertain. About 50,000 at school: this is above the number of girls at school,—the total number of children between three and fifteen, attending schools for the working classes in one day in 1856, was 100,200; but the average attendance of boys is above that of girls. The number of children not attending any day school, 53,400; the number at

work between three and fifteen, 35,800. Of these ten were between three and four; nine between four and five. It is by no means of all these — only of a small minority, I trust, that it is true they stand in need of being educated and Christianised. Thank God, our "working classes" are to a considerable extent leavened with Christianity. But great numbers of them are without it. Great numbers of them are falling lower and lower, in part for want of those very blessings of which we have so much we scarcely know how to make any use. There are numbers of families, who, for generations past, have had no time for minding home comforts, and who never learnt the art of making them—an unavoidable ignorance, which by increasing the poverty of such families tends to make the next generation more destitute, comfortless, homeless still; till we almost begin to wonder at what degree of destitution life will cease to be possible.

## CHAP. VII.

### HOW THEY ARE BROUGHT UP.

THEIR HOMES; THEIR EARLY HABITS; DAILY LIFE. — DOMESTIC SERVICE.—THEIR AMUSEMENTS.—THEIR ADVANTAGES.—OBLIGED TO LABOUR. — DAY SCHOOLS.—SUNDAY SCHOOLS.—THEIR CONDITION WHEN GROWN UP. — RESULTS. — IMMORALITY. — INFIDELITY.

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"There are circumstances in which a religious life seems impossible. There are societies, amidst which some are forced to dwell daily in which the very idea of Christian rest is negatived. There are occupations in which purity of heart can scarcely be conceived. There are temptations to which some are subjected in a long series, in which to have stood upright would have demanded not a man's but an angel's strength."

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FROM childhood they live mostly in houses which make it impossible for their mothers to accustom them to modest habits. Indeed, these mothers, brought up themselves for the most part in the same way, have very little idea of the importance of such habits, and still less how to make the best use, in this respect, of the means they have. I do not speak this as a reproach—it is a wonder they have any feeling left about it at all, and many do feel it to be a great trouble. But two-chambered cottages are not to be had in many places; not even in the rustic, innocent-looking little villages

that nestle round their church and the manor-house, free from all taint of manufactures, and all belonging to one owner:* and a three-chambered cottage is a luxury which very few of the labouring class could honestly indulge in.

Further, too many of them grow up unchecked in rude and disrespectful manners: they meet with the same themselves: they hear falsehoods unblushingly spoken, and witness dishonest tricks and cheating all around them; too often their fathers and mothers, always some of their neighbours and playfellows, practise them. The extortions practised by retail dealers, middle-men, and by employers, is a great bar to the formation of honest habits in those who, being too much in their power to resist, consider themselves quite justified in repaying it with the like dishonesty whenever they get the chance.† If they do not hear bad language and quarrelling at home, they must hear and see them from their neighbours and

* I saw with astonishment a statement lately put forth, to the effect that it is the habit of many parents, if they have two bedrooms, to keep one for themselves and crowd all their children into the other. I never met with or heard of such an arrangement. I never heard of any, the most wicked, who would have dreamt of it; nor can I believe, from their habits, they would attach any idea of comfort to having a bedroom to themselves. I believe the charge is the result of imagination.

† It is very hard for people who must run into debt from time to time, and who, all through their lives, can at the most just clear off the old score before sickness or short work obliges them to run up a fresh one, to be honest; and the children are always made the agents to get trust at the shop, and make the promises of certain payment, which they know will be all broken.

schoolfellows. Drunkenness is much too often witnessed to be in the least shocking to them. Then the uneducated have no idea of reserve before their children; whatever immorality goes on is talked over, and retalked, and surmised about, and detailed before the youngest boys and girls. It would be no great exaggeration to say, that the main subjects of their education are such things as St. Paul said ought not to be once named amongst us. The society that forms their world is to a great extent irreligious; it is in a still greater degree immoral.

For their daily life, the one great duty they are taught is to get their own living as soon as they can; and a very good lesson it is. But then so long as they do this diligently, all offences of another kind are overlooked. It requires no small power of government in a father steadily to refuse the "rights of the latch-key" even to girls, who are not only breadwinners for themselves, but "right good girls at their work" for their parents. And if they are not good ones to work, a sum is fixed which they pay their parents weekly, and what they get over is their own, for clothes and pocket money, "to encourage them," as their parents say; so that if their work is at all steady, they soon become independent. Then, to make the most of the daylight, all who work at home or in the factories have the "dark hour" of twilight given them for play, and an hour at dinner time, to be spent mostly in the streets; it is hard there-

fore for their parents to guard them, for if they must work they must also get out of doors and play; and when all the population turn out at the same time, their companions and amusements cannot be very easily chosen for them.

If, instead of working thus at home, they go into service, it is generally as nurse girls, to drag a heavy child about the streets, or maids-of-all-work in the houses of the richer mechanics, of the smaller shopkeepers, or as farm-servants. And if ladies knew or would consider what their life is here, they might not be so positive in urging mothers to send them out to service so early and so ill prepared as they may be at thirteen or fourteen, I will not say to resist temptation, but even to know what is temptation. Their condition too often is one of hard work, bad work, and no teaching,—there is no time for it. By bad work I mean slovenly, dirty work, such as totally unfits them for any better service. Look at one of these girls on a week day—ah, and late on Sundays too. At home, or working in a factory, her dress might be tidy, even smart, her hair smooth and bright, her face and hands clean; it is impossible they should be so now. Her open mouth and vacant face, as she leans on her mop-stick to gape down the street, tell a tale of work above her strength; her dingy, unbuttoned frock, dull rough hair, coarse red arms, and blackened, smeared face, are the fruits of it. Is she so much safer for having neither time nor desire for those naughty

ribands and intricate, but glossy plaits, that used to vex the spirit of her Sunday-school teacher? In farm service the work must be done better, with more cleanliness and order; but too often they are little cared for in any other respect. It seems as though very hard work has a debasing moral effect on women; they certainly seem to grow more dull, more sensual, more hard in these services. If the maids have done their work before supper, in very many farm-houses they are not allowed candles to sew or read by; but boys and maids alike sit in the kitchen dozing or gossiping through the long winter evenings, whilst the farmer and his wife are in the parlour. Another evil is the inveterate custom in these services of hiring and being hired for a year: the temptation of a week's holiday and going to the fair to be hired, overcomes too often all other considerations; and this constant change of service is a great obstacle to any attempt to improve them. The busy mistress is glad if the new girl does her work with less telling and less scolding than the last; if not, it is not worth while to be at the trouble of teaching her; very likely she would not mend if she did; almost before she becomes perceptibly more useful the year is out, and all the trouble of teaching is to come over again. So she loses all interest in her servants except that of getting as much work out of them as she can, and speaks of them, not as Mary or Jane, but as "the girl I have now, the girl I had last." This particular portion

of our young girls can only be materially improved by improvement in their mistresses, and in their own industrial teaching in schools. But the number of poor girls who are ruined in farm service is fearfully great, and as their misconduct is no bar to their getting a place again,—especially if the child dies, as it very often does,—it is counted no disgrace; so they go back again, often from the debasement of the workhouse, to spread the evils they have learnt among their fellow-servants.

Their amusements must be such as will match with such a training; they must be noisy and boisterous, and something coarse, or they would not be amusing. Their holidays come at fixed times, differing in different parts of the country; and are kept as amongst ourselves, by leaving off work, visiting their friends, by eating, drinking, and dressing more and better than usual; but then they have too often nothing more than this, except what is positively evil. Dancing in public-houses, gipsying, with romping games, tea-gardens, low theatres, fairs; in all they are unguarded, left to themselves. And if it is not safe for young women of our own rank, carefully taught, and trained to dislike and avoid every approach to what is coarse or evil in outward things, to go to parties or public amusements amongst ladies and gentlemen without a mother's care, what must it be for those girls who have been so trained that what is evidently evil to us is not in the least re-

pulsive to them; that what is really innocent has little attraction for them; who are bent on repaying themselves for a year's drudgery by a few days' fun; who have no amusements open to them but what they can find in such scenes, alongside with drunkenness and rioting, and which they must partake without any guidance but their own discretion?

These are their disadvantages, and, excepting the necessity they are under to work, they have very few advantages to counteract these. When there is no other moral restraint, the being obliged to work, and having work to do, often proves an effectual and saving one. Taken as a whole, our people are very industrious and willing workers; but this advantage (of having work) is wanting to very many, is actually secure to comparatively very few. As a body, our working men are not sure of having work all the year round, or with certainty at any time: and hopeful as they always are when they have it, they are beginning to feel insecure. Now, work, to be truly a moral advantage, must be tolerably regular, not unhealthy, and sufficiently paid to enable the labourer to live without over working. But if the working men are not certain of getting work, those whom they call the lower orders have very little chance indeed of procuring regular work by which they can live; and this is the monster obstacle that stands in the way of all improvement of their moral condition. It is hard indeed to say whether the condition of

the greater part of our manual workers is most truly represented by saying that work is their chief moral preservation, or their continual want of work their greatest moral temptation. Still, any work must be counted better than none; nor may we forget that want and sorrow are not, in their own nature, moral evils; they may hereafter prove far greater blessings than over abundance and peace. They are, however, only blessings when united with patient love; and those certainly have no right to speak of their fellows' suffering as gain, who are not doing all in their power to lighten it by their love.

Then there are the day schools: out of 18,700 girls attending workhouse schools, 17,376 were under ten. I do not know whether the same proportion holds in the whole 50,000 said to be at schools; but as the average age of leaving schools is eleven years and a half, and the boys generally stay the longest, it cannot be very different. Now, a girl at school under ten may learn reading and a little writing, and the Bible stories, besides many fine words about other things; but it is obviously impossible to teach her any one of those things which it will most concern her to know as a woman. If she is forward, she may learn to sew neatly, but not to fix her own work, scarcely to complete any article of clothing. So, also, simple religious truths may be taught, and so taught that they will hardly ever be forgotten; but no abiding habits can be formed: a moral law cannot become

the abiding rule of the child's life; duty at that age must be a law imposed from without: remove the teaching, its effect is soon gone. There may be exceptional cases, but this is unquestionably generally true of children at that early age.

After leaving these schools there are for those who do not go at once to service the Sunday schools, where much religious teaching, and that of the most directly practical kind, can still be given, and that up to and beyond the age at which it is possible for such teaching to take independent root in the minds of the scholars—independent, I mean, of the counter-influence of their homes and circumstances. But when they outgrow these—and in towns partly from want of room, in agricultural districts from their going to service, they seldom stay in the Sunday school till they are of age for confirmation—they pass out of sight of their teachers, and are usually left to make their way as they can, with very few or no outward religious helps or instruction, and little guidance, at the time when temptation begins to press upon them most sorely. There is too often no room for them in the churches which they attended as Sunday-school children, and in chapels they have to pay for their sittings if they attend regularly. They have a Bible probably, and are not altogether unused to read it, and they have some pleasant associations with their past religious lessons; but we must consider that the religion of the young is mostly one of feeling, and requires to be nurtured,

directed, and expressed in public worship, and by the hearing of sermons.

Thus they have grown up, for the most part, with no sense of duty as the necessary law that must guide their conduct; without habits of obedience or of self-restraint, ignorant, thoughtless, self-willed, or rather without any moral strength of purpose, impulsive, and unstable as water. If they know anything at all of the Christian religion, it is mostly as a matter of feeling, not of practice; it is not what they do, nor what they are, but what they feel, that makes them Christians or not; not, Am I an obedient daughter, a kind sister, a diligent, honest work-woman? but, Have I been converted, do I know my sins are forgiven? And those who put this fragment of Christian truth for the whole sum of Christian life, when they find it fail themselves or others in the time of temptation, believe that it is Christ's religion that has failed them, and so reject it altogether, or at least lay aside the little restraint that it was to them. Neither have they any restraint from public opinion; *their* public is fully satisfied with those who, "if they don't set up for no better, arn't no worse nor other folk;" a phrase which tolerates any amount of evil short of going to prison, except hypocrisy. Too generally, even in their own homes, they have no friends wiser and stronger than themselves to whose counsel they may trust: to whom they must look up with confidence and reverence, whose good opinion they fear to lose:

nor, if they had, have they been brought up in a way which makes it likely they should listen to advice. They have been so early used to see wrong, to suffer wrong, and to do wrong, they scarcely know it to be wrong; nay, often take revenge, cunning in gain, and selfishness, to be right. A steady and professing Christian woman will continually sum up her own character, socially, with the boast, "I've nothing to do with anybody; I keeps to myself, and minds my own business;" as though this were a necessary condition to the being a Christian.

And so furnished they enter on a life of toil — too often of want, of constant temptation, and often of much suffering, to get through it as they can, each for herself, and with nothing to look forward to in old age but the parish pittance.

And the results? They have been told and retold so often, we need scarcely repeat the fearful tale again. Whether immorality has increased of late years in proportion to the population, is of less consequence to us than the fact of the fearful amount there is of it; open, shameful, and alas, shameless. Forty thousand illegitimate children born in one year represent a small part of these results. We boast of our English morality amongst the upper and middle classes; is it likely to continue if this plague-spot continue? May not those who know of this misery, and might help and do not, be counted before God sharers in its guilt? May they not be endangering their own families as

well as their own souls? As when the pestilence, nursed in undrained lanes and crowded alleys, proves our common humanity by sweeping off the rich as well as the poor, so may this flood of immorality sweep away our narrow fences, and overthrow all our religion but that which is built upon active, untiring love.

However this may be, it is certain that this immorality is not confined to any one class of our poor. Quiet agricultural villages, as well as great manufacturing towns, send their full quota of ruined and miserable ones to sink in the last abyss of woman's degradation. In domestic service, in warehouses, in factories, in shops, in higher stations still, one false step brings loss of character, and poverty, and drunkenness, and despair. We know how we have been guarded and guided, how we have been carefully instructed in God's word and will; but what has been done for them? How few watch to prevent their falling; how very few endeavour to stop the downward course, once begun.

How did those women grow up who haunt our streets by night, where do they live, and where do they die? Where did they come from who fill our gaols? Why are our workhouses so full of women, and yet respectable parents will tell you, "We'll die of hunger or ever we'll take our girls to such a place as the house is; it's not a place as any good girl ought to be in; *you* don't know what it is, ma'am." Who are those forlorn and sickly children who have no father, or who have one they

call father without bearing his name? Why are homes so dirty and miserable, husbands so drunken, wives so ill-treated? Why, amongst the hundreds of thousands of women who want employment, is it so hard to get a tolerable servant, to find a kind and faithful nurse? Ask rather why, where thorns have been planted, we can gather no figs; why, where only the bramble grows, we can find no grapes.

Perhaps it is not logically correct to attribute the great amount of infidelity amongst our working classes to the causes which we have been considering; but it is impossible fairly to estimate their moral and religious wants without taking some account of their condition in this respect. The number of real honest infidels among them is not small: but the number of professing infidels is much greater; and more numerous still are those who, wishing to be infidels, and reading infidel books with willing minds, are keeping the matter in suspense, appeasing conscience with the thought that if they are not certain the Bible is all false, they are very uncertain whether it is all true; and these are in a worse condition far than the first. This is one great difference between our educated and mechanic classes, that whereas we have more knowledge than we know how to use, the intelligent amongst them have more intelligence than information; they are acute but ill-informed, so much so that they can seldom form any estimate at all of the amount of information

necessary for a right judgment on the subjects they discuss. Infidelity is at present far more common amongst the men than the women of our working class; but it has of necessity a great and very bad effect on the moral state of both.

## CHAP. VIII.

### THE REMEDY.

WHO CAN HELP THEM. — HOW? — ATTEMPTS TO GET REGULAR WORK FOR WOMEN. — CONSEQUENCES OF THIS: LOWER WAGES; HINDRANCE TO MARRIAGE. — DANGER OF WORKSHOPS. — BY CHRISTIANISING THEM, ONE BY ONE. — BY EXAMPLE. — THE OLD WORK IN A NEW FORM. — HOW THEY MAY LEARN IT. — DEEDS, NOT WORDS. — STEADY AID WANTED; AND SUCH AS WE COULD GIVE.

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"It is not by regretting what is irreparable that true work is to be done, but by making the best of what we are. It is not by complaining that we have not the right tools, but by using well the tools we have. What we are and where we are is God's providential arrangement—God's doing, though it may be man's undoing; and the manly and wise way is to look your disadvantages in the face, and see what can be made out of them."

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THEIR parents cannot remedy this state of things; they were themselves brought up in the same, or in a yet worse way: the rising generation cannot raise themselves; their very misery is, they know nothing better. The teaching given in our day-schools, which is not and never can be education, least of all for girls, can never, by any perfection to which it is carried, supply the absence of education in moral habits, and womanly tenderness, and reverence: it may do more for boys, but

women's hearts are scarcely to be got at through their heads; and if they could be, the ever-growing demands of trade will not permit these children to be spared for schooling till the age of fifteen; and teaching that ceases at ten or eleven, which after that age can only be carried on for a couple of hours on Sundays, will not remedy, can scarcely touch, the evils which their habits and companions at home cultivate every day and all day long. Experience shows also that the best taught of our working classes are by no means the most moral. Cumberland, for example, which stands one of the highest in the map of education, stands also one of the lowest of all our counties in the map of morality.

Nor can the remedy be found in any Church extension that is either probable or possible: until each member of the professing Church of Christ takes his or her own share of Christ's work, the christianising the great mass of our population will scarcely be begun. The ministers of our Church have more already waiting for them to do than they could possibly accomplish were their numbers doubled; the work which belongs to every individual Christian equally as to their ministers, cannot be done if left to these alone. In the words of a writer in the "Saturday Review," (May '58, p. 440), "We must either do what we have never done before in the way of personal gifts and sacrifices for religion, and do it too not only in a new spirit, but under a new system; or we must make up our minds to the growth of a

population such as the world has never seen since Europe became Christian."

Unless those who have had greater advantages and fewer temptations; who have themselves been civilised, educated in moral habits, and trained up in the Christian faith, will come to help them, must they not stay as they are? or rather, since that is impossible, must they not grow worse and worse? And must not the helpers of girls and women be mostly women? However, we have not now to inquire generally what might be done for the remedy of these evils, but only what we ourselves, being professing Christians and gentlewomen, can do towards diminishing their power.

There are two ways in which they might be helped. By so improving the social condition of the poorer classes as to put them above the reach of those temptations which directly or indirectly arise from want and its consequences; or by helping them to withstand and conquer them. The first of these is, for the most part, beyond our power, or out of our province. Better drainage and better dwellings would no doubt do much in the way of alleviation, and as it is said that both would pay, both are possible; but not to us. But constant and well-paid work not only cannot be secured to them by any artificial* interference whatever, but

* I suppose that all attempts to procure remunerative work for the sake of the workers would be artificial, the natural state of the labour market requiring that workers should be employed when their work is demanded.

the mere attempt to secure it partially for one portion of them often ends by causing more suffering than it relieves.

It may seem useless to try to prove that hurtful, which, hurtful or not, is so much out of *our* power, as is the securing for our poorer women regular employment at remunerative wages. Yet it is now a project so seriously entertained, to save poor single and widowed women from their peculiar dangers, by teaching them trades in which at present only men are employed; and as nothing so hinders a helping hand as wishing to do something that would be more effectual, but is unattainable; or as thinking ourselves able to throw the blame on somebody who might do, and won't do, what we cannot do, it may be as well to consider some of the effects which would attend on the success of such an attempt.

No doubt a great source of immediate suffering, and a terrible temptation to sins of every kind would be removed, if our women could earn a fair livelihood by their own labour. But when employment is to be obtained for them not by any increased demand for labour, but by their sharing in the work which is now done by men of the same class in life, we must remember that this is to deprive a certain number of men of a certain amount of work and wages, in order to give it to an equal number of women—a measure of little utility to the class as a whole, and of still less justice, when the men have already learnt, and

are now living by, their trade. Then the effect of introducing more workers into any trade, when there is no demand for more work, is that all the inferior hands, just those who find it hardest to maintain themselves, and who are most in danger of falling into the lower orders, are thrown out of work, and the wages of all are reduced. This would be the case if the new hands were men. But women's work is always cheaper than men's; they can live on less, and therefore can afford to sell their labour more cheaply: if, therefore, the women who are introduced into the trade can do the work really as well, the manufacturer must require his men to work at a still further reduction of wages. It seems a little hard to speak so severely of the jealousy some workmen have shown at the admission of women into their business. Their objection was, not that women should have the same chance as they had of earning their 20*s.* or 30*s.* a week, but rather because they knew very well the effect of women learning their business would be that their own wages would at once be lowered, and would continue to fall till the level at which women can do work was reached.*

* I speak with much hesitation on this subject, my notions on which are founded on the very limited experience gained by watching the fluctuations of one particular branch of manufacture; but this is the very plea Mr. Bennett put forth in his lecture on female watchmaking: "We must have cheap watches, therefore women must make them." Some time ago it proved necessary to have cheap ready-made clothes; the consequence of which necessity has been the miseries of needlewomen, slop-

Again, a man getting full wages represents a family. A woman doing full work is generally unmarried: had these narrow-minded, jealous men no women at home to think for, no children to feed with the wages they fought for? Selfish, I am afraid, they were; but a selfishness that includes wife and bairns in self is not so very criminal. In a middling, fighting kind of world like this, it might go near to be called a virtue. Reader, did you ever watch some hundreds of these narrow-minded, selfish men, through a long dreary winter of "slack work?" Did you ever lie down, night after night, for six months at a time, with the question uppermost in your mind—How many of our poor people have had a meal to-day? how are they to get one to-morrow? Have you ever heard, week after week, the monotonous answer to your question — How is work now? "None yet," or "Dropped again, and little of that." Then you know that their patience and good sense is above your praise: then, I will venture to say, you know the only thing that passes even *their* patience to endure — even to speak of manfully, is "seeing the children go round picking up the crumbs, and crying for more when they'd done, and not to have it to give them." Then

makers, and journeymen tailors. Whether there is anything in the nature of watchmaking to produce a different result, Mr. Bennett does not say. I wish it could be proved as necessary for us to have well-paid workmen as cheap watches. I am sure our women would be as well off, and it might be cheaper in the end.

you may have noticed how, next year, the mothers of some of the larger families have drooped, and wasted, and died, mostly in consumption; how children here and there have sunk under slight illnesses; how men, in their prime and vigour, have strangely become at once bent and gaunt with age, unfit for a good day's work for the rest of their lives. Then you know what men are fighting for, when fighting against anything that can lower their wages, and you will be slow to call them selfish or ungenerous for resisting the enlightened principles which would tend to bring on themselves so great a misfortune.

Another and still greater evil of such a remedy is surely this: God's remedy for the temptations from want, which we have most to deplore, and most to shield these poor women from, is marriage. The husband's labour is to keep his wife and children from want; the wife's care and love is to cheer him and lighten his toil, and to keep him from temptation by that best of all human supports, a happy home. Is it not, therefore, suicidal to attempt to save these women by effecting a change in the labour market, which, so far as it operates at all, must operate directly to prevent their marrying, or to destroy all chance of comfort when married? One lady writes, that we need not mind depriving men of part of their work, to give it to women, because men can take care of themselves: a fact which seems to me not quite established, but if it were proved, *that* is not their

only business; they ought to take care of wife and children also. How can men marry who can get no work here in England, but must seek it in the colonies? How can marriage be happy if the wife is the bread-winner? By turning over watch-making from men to women, you deliberately make it impossible for those men to support their families, for those women to do their part as wives and mothers. If the telegraph clerk, at 60*l.* a year, is to be replaced by a clerkess at 40*l.*, what good will it do them when they marry? Or what is to become of the wife he has, or was going to have, as soon as he could furnish his house? But if the company can get the same work done for 40*l.* for which they now pay 60*l.*, all their clerks must go, or take the lower salary. And after all, it is a joyless life these women lead, working all day, with no home at night; for what home can a woman have who has no one for whom to arrange and tend it but herself?

It would be well also to consider, before girls are taught any such trades, where they are to carry them on: will they have separate rooms in which to work, or will they be working among the journeymen? Ladies had better consult working men themselves as to the expediency of this last arrangement, which in some trades would be the almost inevitable result of the proposed attempt. The following description of such a shop, where journeymen work together, was given by a man to his poor old mother, who, grieved alike at his distress and at his swear-

ing at it, tried to persuade him to think on his family, and pray to God to pull him through; but not to be in a passion and swear, "for the devil 'ill never help yer; he'll only hinder yer all he can." His answer was, he could not be religious; for working in those large shops is the worst thing for a man as could be; their language is so bad, and their ways; that in his shop there was but one youth as was religious, and the others led him a sorry life: what with laughing at him and abusing him, he had no peace of his life; and he thought if he must lead such a life as that, he had almost better let religion alone. We shall not raise the morality of our women by aiding them to get work in such places as these.

We cannot hope to put them out of the reach of those temptations and miseries which spring from poverty, except in those comparatively few instances in which it may be possible for us to teach them to be better and more skilful workers. But for the mass, what remains is to try to arm them against the temptations; and how? There is but one way — by christianising them. Very easily said; but how is it to be done? Has it not been attempted all these years, and has not this semi-heathen population been growing up around us in spite of all our attempts? No doubt it has been attempted, and never yet in vain, though the mass is still unchristianised. The mass of the educated Christian part of our population has never yet attempted to Christianise the mass of the un-

educated and unchristian. We have thought to vindicate our claim to be regarded as evangelical Christians and enlightened Protestants, by ridiculing and reviling the Romish notion of a peculiar priestly class; but our own priestly office we have not thought of fulfilling. We have done our best to rescue their vineyard from their hands, but our own we have not kept.

But to come to matter of fact: if we all laboured henceforth to Christianise the mass, and devoted our lives to nothing else, they would still be in heart and in life unchristian. If nothing short of reforming a whole population seems a worthy end of your labours, I can offer you no help, for I have no such hope; I believe such a result is impossible under the present dispensation to any, and I am quite sure it is not the work assigned to Christian women. *We* must labour to help and save them one by one. Knowledge may be given to large classes of pupils, and by almost mechanical means. Preachers may teach their hundreds, and statesmen raise the condition of thousands, but there is no wholesale way of imparting moral habits, of training persons in a holy Christian life. *Our* highest labours must be limited to individuals; and whilst they will require a life-long patience, they must be carried on in quiet, without public notice, without great successes, or much visible result. The smallness of the result, however, can afford no possible argument to those who can think of nothing for us to do beyond dressing as well as we can, and

playing our pianos; whilst to ourselves it will be no useless test of the unselfishness of our motives.

It would be something gained in behalf of many a poor toiling girl and much tempted woman, if they could know there are such things as unselfishness, truth, and gentleness, and that all the world is not as hard as they have found it; if they could feel they had some friend, some real, personal, constant friend, who does care for what they do; and who knows no other rule of right and wrong than the law of God, equal to all. It would surely make it easier for them to believe in the Christian truths, if they could somewhere in their daily life and common work, and not only at school on Sundays, see and feel those truths acted on towards themselves,—if they knew some one who respected them, and treated them with respect, as children of the same Father, redeemed by the same Saviour, and heirs of the same promise; if they could no longer say, "No man careth for my soul." For as yet too many even of those who have heard and read of Christ in school and in books, have never met with Christianity in their daily lives.

The work, then, that I would persuade you to labour in, is no new one; neither have I any new way of doing it to point out to you. But the state of society now requires more systematic, more intelligent, and far more united and extended labour, than Christian women have as yet given. Those of them who have laboured in it have done so very much alone, and much toil has been lost

by its desultoriness and irregularity; much, alas, by a misdirected zeal, more busied in pulling down the supposed errors of other labourers than in building upon the truth. The Lady Bountiful, who did her part well in former times, with her kindly gifts and stately words of advice, and much-dreaded rebukes, would now be quite out of place, not only in our towns, but in our large manufacturing villages. And the solitary, unguided visits of simple-minded religious women, who taught the same simple formula of truth to their little scholars on Sunday, and to the aged and sick in their own cottages on the week day, will still bring comfort to those of the poor who have already some Christian hope or fear, and who are past, or have escaped the struggle for existence itself, in which the younger and stronger are absorbed. But if, with no other weapon but true words about faith and duty, we try to set these latter right—to win them from seeking this world only, to securing the next; and to persuade them to bear all resignedly, because they deserve all; or because if they do but get faith (of the right kind) they may not only escape far worse miseries hereafter, but also attain to eternal happiness in heaven; we shall meet with an intellect —perverted it may be—yet sharper, cleverer, and more practical than our own, before which our superiority in faith and knowledge of the truth will be thrown away. We shall find no real point of union with them in this way, however they may seem to assent, because we do not understand and

realise *what* it is they have to contend against; and the sacred truths we tell them of become objects of mockery and hatred, because from their point of view they are so unpractical and unreal.

Must then only highly educated, mathematical reasoners, or manly intellects try to teach them? I think these would be, for the most part, even more useless still; our operative classes are acute, but not educated; they cannot therefore appreciate true reasoning; they are much more easily led by any sophistry which joins itself on to their own prejudices, than by the strictest demonstration, founded on the most certain premisses.

One thing, however, they understand much better than we do; and that is, actual matter of fact: they may not care for your words, but your deeds, and even your looks and tones, they understand with a hard and rather alarming certainty, In our pleasant and leisurely ease we live more in the past and in the future than in the present. In their life of struggle the present absorbs, indeed requires, all their thoughts. We can think out our principles to their consequences, and consider and weigh the truths we learn, and the practical conclusions to which they should lead us. We think of what God has done for men in the past, and of what He will do in the future, until these things become our reality, and our tranquil outer life is like a passing dream: thus we learn the truth first, and then gradually the practice of it. And then we write little books or tracts, to tell

these truths — which are indeed our life, and rightly so — to our toiling, struggling fellows, and lament that they do not heed them, will not come to hear them; and sometimes wonder if some new machinery for teaching would answer better, and sometimes rail at the hardness of heart which will not hear the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely. I trust not to be so misunderstood, as though I spoke lightly of the infinite importance of the truth of God revealed to us by the divine Word, for our salvation; but it seems to me that we are mostly living on the past and the future works of Christ, whilst what our poor are perishing for want of is the knowledge of His present work for them, now, on earth: the truth that concerns their daily life and daily struggle; not so much the "How shall I be sure of heaven?" "How shall I get rid of the past?" as, "How shall I honestly get bread for myself and those God has trusted to me, and so do His will to-day?" Most assuredly a true Christian faith and obedience will now, as ever, bring those who exercise it safely through the most fiery temptations, poverty, wasting care, and suffering, — proving victorious over all; but it does not exactly follow that little tracts, nor good books, nor even the possession of the Bible itself, nor personal exhortations given by those who are out of the reach of the same temptation or difficulty, will suffice to stem the torrent of evil down which over-work, over-anxiety, bad air, insufficient food, crowded lodgings, bad examples,

and, far above all these, the hopelessness of anything better before death, are daily dragging so many of our fellow-men out of sight of our comfortable, respectable world; and out of mind also, unless they reappear to shock us in our prisons or penitentiaries, ruined in body and soul, and apparently possessed of the devil; or are dragged out of the dark flowing sewer river, as "one more unfortunate," to be shuddered at, apostrophised, and forgotten.

There is another way of teaching the truth than that by which we learnt:

> "And so the Word had breath, and taught
> With human hands the creed of creeds,
> In loveliness of perfect deeds,
> More strong than all poetic thought;
> Which he may read who binds the sheaf,
> Or builds the house, or digs the grave;
> And those wild eyes which watch the wave
> In roarings round the coral reef."

It is the way of deeds, not words only; by human hands, not by striking tracts. Many of them have never met with Christianity in all their lives; is it wonderful they do not care for Christian ideas? You tell them of a heaven of joy and love — they know only a world of struggle and contention. You tell them of the happiness of holiness — they know no pleasure equal to "beer and a fiddle." It is fine talk, and pleasant to hear, if they had time to mind it; but they must toil all their days, and often nights too, to get bread and coal, and pay the rent and rates. These facts are

closer to them than your thoughts, and they are facts that will and must be minded; they heed nothing but the facts they feel. Let them feel, then, some few Christian facts; let us act out our Christian faith in Christian deeds among them; and as we have learnt Christian practice from Christian truths, so may they learn Christian truth from Christian works. They do not heed a sermon about Christ's love. But if you have nursed a man's wife or child through illness, and when he thanks you, can say, "He who is your Lord and mine bid me do it for you — we must both thank Him;" he may then learn that Christ's love to him and care for him is something more than words in a book.

And the greater the temptation becomes, so much the stronger and steadier must be the help we hold out to those whom we cannot save from passing through it. Instead of sending them tracts to warn them, we must hold out to them a loving, helping hand; not only when their danger is distant, but firmest when sin is nighest to them. Instead of sending them Bibles merely, to tell them we are all brothers and sisters in Christ, let us show we really count them as such, and therefore count nothing too much to do for them, and cannot cast them off for their faults. At least let us show them we know their difficulties are far greater than ours, and that we are watching and longing for their triumph over their temptations; and, above all, that we do not mean

to help them once or twice, and then to say, we have done enough, and forget them; but that they will always find in us sympathising, patient, real love; ready to counsel them, but refusing to rule them; taking pleasure in giving them what aid can be given, but without pretending that we or any other human being can fight their battle for them.

If it is impossible thus to know and strengthen the hearts of many, each one of us can do it for some two, or three, or more. And there is nothing, I think, in this work, that is altogether out of the sphere of an educated gentlewoman; there certainly are some parts of it which no one else can do at all.* This personal work, the work of one human being for another, demands many more labourers than are required for operating on them through books and tracts—many more than can possibly be supplied by ordained ministers.

Here, in many of the stately and many of the pleasant homes of England, are willing helpers, educated and Christian women, whose only want is, that they are of so little use to any. Is it right for them to undertake it? There—in every lane and alley, in garrets and cellars, throughout the whole kingdom—are other women by thousands, perishing slowly, both in body and soul, and partly for want of such help. How can we give it them?

* The disgraceful meetings, lately held in connection with confession, &c., must have convinced all reflecting persons, whether of Low or High Church, of this.

# CHAP. IX.

## OUR WARRANT.

1. IS IT OUR WORK? — HOW OUR OWN WORK IS POINTED OUT TO US. — ARGUMENT FROM ANALOGY. — FROM SCRIPTURE.— ST. PAUL'S ACCOUNT OF WOMEN'S DUTY.—CONCLUSION.—2. IS IT SAFE? — DANGER OF LOSING INNOCENCE. — FORCE OF THIS OBJECTION. — IGNORANCE OF EVIL. — WHEN THE KNOWLEDGE OF EVIL IS DEGRADING. — LOSS OF INNOCENCE INEVITABLE. — BUT MAY BE TURNED INTO A HIGHER GOOD. — THIS WORK ITSELF PURIFYING. — AMOUNT OF THE RISK.

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"We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign her with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter she shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the Devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto her life's end."

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FIRST. Is it right for women who are by God's Providence placed in one class of society, to employ themselves chiefly in the service of another class, and that one so far removed, outwardly, from their own? And, secondly, is it wise for women, who have by God's mercy been kept safe from seeing and hearing the grosser forms of evil, to place themselves face to face with them, and attempt to contend against them?

However great and urgent the necessity for such work as we have been considering is, yet that alone

will not warrant *our* undertaking it: unless it is the very work which Christ has appointed for us, we must not attempt it, we cannot, in fact, do it. Long ago we were taught, that to do our duty at all it must be done in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call us; nowhere else can we hope for that blessing without which we can never succeed, or for that protection without which we dare not live. And generally, it is by the position and circumstances in which we are placed, and by the gifts severally divided to each, that God marks out for us where our special work is to be found, and what our calling is; but circumstances point out this negatively as well as positively. When St. Paul essayed to go into Bithynia, and was prevented, his conclusion was, not that he should stay where he then was, but that he must be intended to work somewhere else; and so it came to pass. Neither does it follow, because we are born and brought up in one class, that our work must lie amongst those who are in the same rank with ourselves, or that we owe nothing to those who are not of our family or neighbourhood. Bishop Butler, as we have seen, expressly affirms that compassion for the needy has a prior and stronger claim upon us than general kindness has; nor do people ever suppose it to be so in respect of any other class than this of unmarried gentlewomen. They who have riches are spoken of in the Scripture as having a special work to do, not for the rich, but for the poor—they who have knowledge, as having

a peculiar duty to the ignorant—they who know the way of holiness, to the sinful. And, in like manner, our leisure time, the freedom from care and anxiety in which we live, the education we have received, our knowledge and accomplishments, our health, and comparative wealth; all, in the measure in which they have been given us, place us in a peculiar relation to those who have them not. They certainly were not given us for the use of those who have the same gifts themselves, probably in a higher degree. They are not great gifts, but they are just as much talents given to be used in God's service, as if they were the greatest ever bestowed on man; and they are directly applicable to the service of those who have them not — the uneducated and suffering. From analogy, then, it appears that so far as our station and circumstances can be considered to point out our duty, they direct us to a work for those who are less blessed in these respects than ourselves.

When all nations are described as gathered together in the day of judgment, they are divided into two portions. On the one side are all those who, for the love of Christ their Lord, have fed the hungry, have given drink to the thirsty, have lodged the stranger, have clothed the naked, have visited the sick and the prisoner. On the other side are all those who have not done this. It is not men only, nor persons of any one class, but all human beings together, of every class

and of every rank, small and great, strong and weak, who are thus judged. They who are condemned excuse themselves by saying they never had the opportunity of doing any of these things for the Lord, but the excuse is rejected as false: either, therefore, they must have had the occasion and neglected to use it; or their not having it is counted their own fault: they have it not, because they do not seek it out.

From this we conclude that these and such like works of love form the common general work in which all are to labour for Christ, according to their several ability, unless when some other special work is specially assigned to any individuals by His Providence, which requires their whole time and strength; that these are the works with which we are again to occupy ourselves when those special duties cease to demand our care; and that the women of whom we have been speaking, who have no such special claim upon them, must seek out their work in this general field of mercy, and labour amongst the destitute, the suffering, and the unhappy.

St. Paul, in describing what her past life ought to have been who in her old age was a fit person to be supported by the church, and invested with a certain control and care over her own sex—in describing, therefore, the true life of a Christian woman—says; she must have been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works, "who has brought up children, has lodged strangers, has

washed the saints' feet, has relieved the afflicted, has diligently followed every good work." Again he says, the aged women must be exhorted to be teachers of good things, that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children; to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands. But as all the young women do not marry, what are the unmarried to do? Is that course of life which the aged widow is commended for having pursued, closed to them? In another place St. Paul says, "There is a difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband."* Without pretending to explain the full meaning of this passage, it cannot be pressing it too far to say, that caring for the things of the Lord is the proper business of the unmarried, just as truly as caring for the things of the world, how she may please her husband, is of the married woman; and that caring for the things of the Lord must certainly include such works of love to men as our Saviour has told us He counts as done to Himself; and such as those of which St. James speaks when he says, "Pure religion, and undefiled †, before God

* 1 Cor. vii. 34.

† "The outward worship and service of Christian religion." Coleridge: Aids to Reflection, introduction, aphorism 23.

and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Here then we have numbered up all those labours of love which we are desirous of seeing all women of leisure engaged in.

The "bringing up of children" has generally been understood not only of her own children, but as referring to what was a common practice of old, the adopting of children; which was frequently practised by the early Christians, who rescued the infants exposed by their heathen parents, baptized, and brought them up as their own, in the Christian faith. Translated into the corresponding work needed in the present day, motherly care of orphan homes, of the neglected workhouse children, of ragged schools, &c., seems most nearly to answer to it. "Washing the saints' feet," like the cup of cold water spoken of by our Lord, shows us that no thought for the merest outward refreshment, or momentary comfort of our fellows, can be too unimportant to engage the care of Christian women. "The aged women to be teachers of good things — to teach the younger women." I suppose no one will insist on the limitation of age here given further than this, that they who teach the younger women shall be qualified to teach by their superior knowledge, by good sense, and by their own practice, and that they be old enough to teach without impertinence: that women of any age may rightly teach children, no one will dispute.

There are four remarks I wish to make on these passages. The first is, that the works here named, whilst possible to all Christians, are most easy to those who have some degree of competence beyond what their own support demands; whilst the objects of these works are the poor, sick, afflicted, the young and inexperienced, the prisoner, the widow, and the fatherless, so that they cannot be fully performed by those of the rich, who limit their care to the prosperous and comfortable in their own immediate circle.

And next, that they are all works that *may* be carried on in private, without any notoriety; but they *must* be done personally and individually. This is evident from the minuteness of some of them being such, that their whole real value to those for whom they are done is the kindly feeling they prove, which is just the very thing that cannot be expressed by any possible system of deputed charity. And still more from the express words, "*I* was sick, and ye visited me; in prison, and ye came unto me." Who could plead, "I did not go myself, but I gave some money towards sending a doctor, or a chaplain, or a tract," when the Lord says He himself was there, waiting to see whose love would bring them to Him.

Thirdly: that whilst the only teaching mentioned as assigned to women is the teaching of women; and whilst the subjects named are none of them suitable for public lectures; the main moral and social training of women is here allotted by St. Paul, and by the Church, to women.

And lastly: that these works of love and kindness are spoken of as generally the appointed work and duty of Christian women, and especially of the unmarried and widows; and not as the "exceptional work" of a few exceptional "angels." Whilst virgins they are taught to care for the things of the Lord, being "adorned in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not in costly array, but as becometh women professing godliness, with good works." Having been thus trained up in daily offices of gentleness, thoughtfulness, and love, and so in the habitual exercise of (useful) self-denial; if they marry, their work is defined with equal clearness — "to mind the things of the world, how they may please their husbands," — not, however, to the exclusion of their former works, so far as these are compatible with the superior claims of husband, children, and households (for we have seen by what is said of widows, what active kindness is required of married women beyond the pale of home). And falling back again upon those, as these are completed in the natural course of life, or ended by death.

Then, secondly, is it wise and safe for women who have been brought up without witnessing, scarcely even hearing of the grosser forms of vice, and whose influence for good, in their own families especially, in a great measure arises from and is dependent on this comparative innocence of evil, to be brought into constant intercourse with those who from infancy have known little else than evil?

I feel this to be a most difficult subject to speak of, partly from not knowing how great might be the danger of becoming familiar with open vice among many of those whom we wish to aid: it is very possible to do a good deal amongst the poor, and see and hear no more evil (nor indeed so much) than daily lies on our own tables. But it is not possible to have much real intercourse with those who perhaps most need it, without suffering a good deal of pain and a good deal of annoyance from this cause. There is no question but this must be borne, and that it will be sometimes a heavy price silently paid down, as it were, for the privilege of being useful; and those who make up their minds not merely to play with the pleasanter parts of the work, but to go straight on with it, wherever it leads them, must be prepared to endure the loss of their childlike ignorance of evil; they cannot again be as they were. No doubt many grossly exaggerate this danger, as when they take it for granted that intercourse with criminals, or even with the exceedingly poor and wretched, is intercourse with crime, or with low and debasing thoughts: necessarily so that is. But on the other hand, when persons begin to talk of Una and her lion, and to quote "unto the pure all things are pure," as a reason why innocent young women should not shrink from gaining the knowledge of evil, one is very sure they are saying what they do not themselves understand. It is rather too absurd to call people pure in one breath, and in the next

to suppose that to know evil is a pleasure they have a right to claim; to extol them for innocence, and then exhort them to have no fear of thinking or speaking of vice. Evil in books — such books as these writers read and write — and evil in squalid real life are such very different things, I do not wonder at the mistake; I can only say to those who have not yet met much of the reality, they must be prepared to find the latter even more painful, more revolting, than the former is interesting; and it would be just as wise to invite them to walk in the gutter because their dress is so spotlessly neat, as to say that *because* they are innocent, they need not shrink from encountering guilt. Another difficulty in the subject is, that it is a question rather of degree, and of age, than of any fixed and positive rule; but that it is hard to say exactly why it should be so.

The objection might be met by saying that when God gives any one a work to do, He will keep them from all moral evil in the doing it; and doubtless no safeguard of man's devising will ever keep any one in mind and heart so safe from the pollution of sin, as will a humble, faithful, diligent performance of her appointed work. But I do not suppose this will, nor do I think it ought, to satisfy parents and guardians; for it assumes that the body of Christian women of whom we speak have already attained so much of faith and obedience as to live and work in dependence on the immediate guard and guidance of the Holy Spirit; and therefore

to be able safely to lay aside the human guardianship to which His weaker children are entrusted. Some are, all ought to be; but whilst too many in fact have not attained this, they cannot act upon the unrealised ideal with safety.

This objection has often been used to cover another, quite as strongly felt, but not so much put forward,—I mean the aversion with which many have regarded the "monstrous notion, that ladies brought up in all the elegancies of refined life should go into the midst of squalid poverty, of dirt and rudeness." It is scarcely worth answering this; the very statement of it in plain English is surely a sufficient exposure. The greater the wretchedness, the more need of our help; and what some have daily to endure, we can surely bear to witness, so long as we can do anything to lessen the suffering. It would be hard to say what profit there is in being ladies, if it is not that we may be braver in enduring, more gentle in comforting, more quick to feel another's distress, more strong in conquering our own, than other women. It needs no refinement to express disgust and horror at dirt and misery; the vulgarest woman in the country could do this in far more emphatic notes than any lady could. Probably, however, the Crimean nurses have silenced all these objections; and it is only the danger of moral injury, in the way of blunting moral sensibility, we need consider.

I have spoken of the comparative peace, com-

fort, and leisure, in which we live, and (with some fear lest I should exaggerate them) the powers with which we have been endowed, as being talents by the use of which we ought to try, and may hope to help those women who have a more rugged and more slippery path to walk than we have; but all the time I have felt more and more that the one blessing next to our common Christian inheritance, which distinguishes our lot, and may enable us to be of use to them,—the mercy, for which we should most of all thank God, and under Him the English men and English writers by whose watchfulness it has been preserved to us—is, that from our childhood we were kept free from the knowledge of a depravity amongst which too many have had to grow up; that falsehood, cruelty, brutal manners, evil language, and the still more destructive forms of sin did not come near us; that we were kept from seeing them, from hearing of them, for the most part ignorant of their real existence in the world around us, until the fearful horror or the bitter pang, as of personal shame, which strikes to a girl's heart and hides itself there when first she learns—too generally from some chance newspaper,—of the existence of such crimes in the very land she lives in, is changed, as growing years and longer trial have strengthened her faith in the all-victorious power of God, to the thought, "For this, then, also Christ died; oh, Father in heaven, let Thy kingdom come." Boys and men must meet with these things in actual

life, and therefore are taught to know and conquer them in another way; and we can partly understand what a refreshment it must be to a young man living in the midst of temptations, and vexed from day to day with seeing and hearing the unlawful deeds of godless men, to turn to his mother's and sisters' home as to a haven of peace and comparative purity; or to make their conscience the touchstone of right and wrong when the whirlpool in which he is entangled has drowned for the time the voice of his own. Or if he has fallen in the battle with temptation, that he should long for that mother's home, as King Arthur did for his island valley,—

> "Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
> Deep meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns,
> And bowery hollows crowned with summer sun,
> Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

And God forbid it should ever be otherwise; that English gentlewomen should ever become more knowing in evil; less fearful of knowing it; that English women should ever become so familiar with the thought of vice as to write of it in the bewildered Emersonian or Goethesque way that some women in other lands have adopted. One almost fears such a change is not impossible; if it should come, "woman's mission" will be at an end, for there will no longer be any to fulfil it: whether they will be raised or degraded; whether they will, in this respect, have made themselves

equal to men, or have sunk altogether below them, is a question beyond the bounds of our inquiry, for it is of woman and woman's business only we have to speak.

What, then, is the real amount of this danger? It is clear we must not, by too rash a zeal for doing good, overthrow those barriers which the good sense of civilised society and the true chivalry of Christian men have raised to guard us from evil and from the pain of witnessing it; lest, instead of aiding others to rise above it, we only become ourselves hardened to it.

When does the seeing or hearing what is evil injure the character of him who does not partake in the wrong-doing? "The tendency of all emotions is to become weaker by repetition, or to be less acutely felt the oftener they are experienced. So, for example, the indignation which an act of cruelty excites in us when we first witness it, grows weaker the oftener we see it: in other words, we get used and hardened to it, and in the end cease to care about it. On the other hand, the tendency of actions is to become easier by repetition, so that those acts which at first required close and continued attention," or a strong effort of will, "come to be performed without effort, almost without consciousness. Now, an affection properly consists of an emotion leading to an action; and the natural progress of the mind in the proper exercise of the affections is, that the emotion is less felt as the action becomes easier and more familiar.

Practical habits are formed and strengthened by repeated acts, whilst passive impressions grow weaker by being repeated upon us; thoughts that often pass through the mind are felt less sensibly; being accustomed to danger begets intrepidity; the instances of other's mortality lessens the sensible impression of our own. Hence active habits may be gradually forming and strengthening by a course of acting on such and such motives, whilst these motives are continually less and less sensibly felt. Thus, by accustoming ourselves to any course of action, we get an aptness to go on, a facility, and often pleasure in it; the inclinations that made us averse to it grow weaker; the difficulties lessen; the reasons for it offer themselves of course to our thoughts on all occasions, and the least glimpse of them becomes enough to make us go on, whilst the contrary principles being accustomed to submit, do so habitually, and of course." · *Dr. Abercrombie.*—This is the healthy progress of the mind; when, as the emotion diminishes in force, it is replaced by its proper action, and mere intensity of feeling is changed into the habit of active kindness. If, therefore, a person is exposed to the continual sight and knowledge of evil which excites horror and pity, whilst she does nothing to oppose or remedy it, she must get to care less and less about it, till at last it may become quite indifferent to her. She has lost the safeguard of feeling, and gained no other. But they who only witness the evil in order to undo it, to try to rescue the doer of it

from its power, or his victims from its effects—on these the effect is just the reverse. The violence of their first feeling indeed subsides, though it never ceases as in the other case; but it subsides only as it becomes the habit of their soul to suffer no wrong to pass unopposed or unrepaired. Nor does this effect in the least depend on the success of their opposition: the longer we fight against any evil the more necessary it becomes to us to oppose it, though it may seem to continue quite triumphant. Indeed, Dr. Abercrombie has hardly stated the case strongly enough; for when a feeling is thus steadily acted on, its indulgence becomes a necessity to us; and if the emotion it occasions is less violent, is it not that it is no longer weak? Now, a girl's ignorance of evil is only comparative, and it must grow less and less; they *must* get used to hearing and seeing it as they grow older. Where, then, is the good of cutting them off from the real safeguard,—the habit of active opposition to it? The work which we propose for them, if piously, wisely, and humbly carried on, would itself be a better safeguard of the purity of the workers, would train them to more of holiness and love, than the utmost innocence of evil practicably attainable can do. There are moral and social statistics mooted now in every corner of society, brought out in every newspaper, in every religious society's report, on every platform almost, which bring before young women an amount of misery and vice of which they used to be quite unconscious.

It must do them some harm, if they only hear of it to be shocked by it. It will not do to say, "let them know as little as possible of it." Unless the knowledge is turned by true and loving labour into good, our women must grow less and less innocent, less tender to misery, as they grow older; and at fifty must be less fit to be pure-minded, gentle-hearted mothers to their sons, than they were at twenty.

Then, in most cases, it is not only unnecessary, but it would often be worse than useless as regards the very persons we wish to help, that we should know the particulars of their past lives. If we did, not being able to estimate their temptations, we should be sure to think them worse than they are — an effectual bar to our doing them any good. Woman cannot be brought back to modesty or uprightness by being detected and shamed, though it be only by another woman. It is not by exhorting or reproving them concerning the sins they know too well, but by teaching them something of the love and gentleness, the truth and purity, of which they have known too little, that they can be reclaimed. Just as when you would check the rude loud voices of an untaught set of children, you do it, not by shouting them down, but by taking peculiar care to speak in the clearest and gentlest accent; or as when you try to mend their rude and boisterous manners, you do not tell them they are rude and vulgar, and disagreeable, but by courteousness, as well as

by kindness of manner, silently demand, and show you expect, civility from them; in the same way, to control the violent and ungoverned temper of some of these poor women, they must be met on our part with peculiar patience and self-control. And if we are to strengthen the tempted and wavering, or to raise the fallen, it must be by keeping before their mind whatever things are pure, holy, and of good report. It is not by the threats of the law, or by dwelling upon sin, but by the knowledge of the Father and the Son — of perfect holiness and infinite love, that sinful souls are made pure; nay, this is itself Eternal Life.*

But to raise the fallen is a very small part of the work: to keep the tempted from falling is much the widest and most important portion of it, and it is by labouring in this we shall be best prepared for that. Keeping a child out of the fire is not a work that calls for much praise, or attracts much notice; and yet it is far more useful to the child, as well as less dangerous to ourselves, than to snatch it out of the fire when it has been suffered to fall in. When the work undertaken is in hospitals, in any classes that meet for given purposes, in schools, or in teaching servants, &c., the subjects of communication being either

* In reformatory prisons, in refuges and homes for the outcasts, one of the first precautions found necessary, is to prevent all intercourse among the inmates about their past lives; partly to prevent their laying plans for the future, chiefly because, by continuing the pollution from which it was hoped they might be rescued, it was found to render all other teaching fruitless.

fixed or at the choice of the teacher, no danger of this kind can be encountered. Nor, when the object of the visitor is known, would she be likely to meet with the least annoyance of this kind from the men she might encounter. It may seem a strange thing to say — it certainly is a sad one; but unquestionably, what I should most dread for daughters of my own, would be their indiscriminate visiting of old women. A young girl visiting an old woman cannot help listening to her as well as reading, or seeing after her little comforts; younger women are not generally such determined talkers. Their own family troubles; their children, bad health or bad work, are more interesting to them than gossip about their neighbours; and should it be otherwise, it is easier to stop them peremptorily. If the reports of the state of London workhouses be correct, their schools, or selected cases in their infirmaries, are all that younger ladies can attend to at present: but surely such a state of things needs only to be known in order to be remedied. General visiting among the poor in large towns, or work in reformatories, cannot be undertaken by them; not only on this account, but as demanding both experience and training, and a courage which is only admirable in women when it is the produce of matured good sense.

With respect to the first, indeed, it is doubtless necessary for women of our age to be guided by the information and advice of those who know the district and can tell them where their visits might

be useful. From the clergyman of the district, the medical officers of the parishes and dispensaries, &c., from city missionaries, often from tradesmen, and from the elder children of our poorer schools, such information can be obtained; not by isolated individuals perhaps, but by such central associations as we wish to see established in every populous district. And it would not be one of the least advantages, that any lady wishing to help, and having only a few hours perhaps to spare in the week, could at once obtain from them information as to where, her aid is most wanted, and where she could with safety go.

If then, in the pursuit of such work, gentlewomen should have to hear and see more of actual vice than they knew before; yet must their whole mind be employed in learning what is right, true, and holy, and their constant endeavour so to learn as to be able to teach. And when we consider that this knowledge of evil is to a great extent inevitable, and that a frivolous, useless life has nothing in itself strengthening or purifying, it must, I think, be granted, that that path is quite as safe as this: it only remains that we follow it with prudence, and without conceit or self-will.

# CHAP. X.

## A PROTESTANT CHAPTER; SHOWING HOW THE WORKERS AND THEIR WORK MAY BE BROUGHT TOGETHER.

HOW TO REACH THOSE WHO NEED US.— SEPARATION OF THEIR HOMES AND OURS: EFFECT OF THIS. — TO HELP THEM WE MUST LIVE AMONGST THEM, AND WORK IN UNION.—EVILS OF ISOLATED LABOUR. — ADVANTAGES OF SUCH CENTRAL HOMES IN LARGE PARISHES FOR SECURING: 1. DIVISION OF LABOUR; 2. NEEDFUL INSTRUCTION FOR THE WORKERS; 3. THE PERMANENCE OF THE WORK; 4. FOR TRAINING SERVANTS, AND INDUSTRIAL TEACHING; 5. RELIEF TO THOSE WHO NEED IT.—PLAN OF A LADIES' HOME: ITS GOVERNMENT. — UNION FOR WORK ONLY. — LENGTH OF RESIDENCE DESIRABLE, ETC.

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"Where is thy brother? And Cain said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper?"

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AND now, if the gentle reader has made up her mind to agree with us on the certainty of the two facts we have been insisting upon — that there are poor and uneducated people in the world whom she could help, and that it is her duty to do so—we trust she will proceed with us patiently whilst we endeavour to show where she can find them, and what she can do for them; but should she still be in doubt as to their truth, we would entreat her to stop here, and make up her mind to a distinct "yes" or "no" before going a step further. First, then, how can we reach them?

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..., than to go from the homes
... ...via to the dens of the poor in
... ...l, or Spitalfields. And other
... ...d in the same disproportion,

and not equally over the country, but running together, as it were, in large masses. So that when you pass through a manufacturing or mining district, it is like going through an enormous straggling town of small poor houses scattered in clusters over treeless, grassless banks and mounds; or wedged together in dingy narrow streets broken up by furnaces, relieved by tall chimneys, and here and there a church tower or a new school,—a welcome sight, yet looking sadly like a graft from some exotic not yet used to the soil. When the Bishop wrote, the rich and poor did at least live in the same town; if the aristocracy moved off to their West End in St. James's Square, yet men of business, merchants, tradesmen, lived where their business was, at their banks, and offices, and shops, and therefore in the midst of their own work-people. But now, whilst the poor are congregating in dense and yet denser masses round their places of work, their employers go as far away as they possibly can. The shopkeepers go to the suburbs; the merchants have their houses along the railroads; country gentlemen forsake their old mansions, and seek new ones where chimneys and poor are not, and are not likely to come. In some towns the working classes form ninety-five per cent. of the population, in some only forty-five. Outside every great town is a suburb of terraces and places; beyond these are suburban villages of villas and lodges, spreading miles away into the country. I suppose

all these are inhabited by people of more or less education and affluence; by families, the heads of which may be very hard-worked men indeed, but whose women are at leisure; and they have no poor within their reach.

But the division spreads further than this: scarcely any one who can afford to choose his home will live even in a large manufacturing village. The small agricultural parishes of the south are seriously injured by the over-visiting and over-giving of their rich inhabitants; whilst in the needy manufacturing villages of the midland and northern counties there are none to help the clergyman either with time or money. The country gentlemen who live near them have no natural connection with them, and too often entertain a pretty strong feeling of repulsion towards the unwashed artisan, who will neither touch his hat nor hold his tongue as the "squire" passes.

If it were merely that this division, by collecting the great body of the poor in one parish, and of the rich in another, throws the burden of the poor-rates far too much on the poor themselves, and leaves those parishes where free church room, free schools, libraries, dispensaries, &c., are the most needed, without inhabitants of sufficient means to provide or maintain them, it would be no slight evil. But there is much more than this in it; it leaves the most intelligent and excitable of the population without persons of education

able to assist and advise them wisely; it makes of the rich and the poor, not one body, but two almost distinct races; they do not know each other, they have no intercourse with each other, and therefore no confidence in each other; except in the way of business they never meet. Out of sight is too often with us out of mind; and the wants we do not see we can bear with great fortitude; and therefore the rich and educated have very little moral influence over, and are of very little benefit to, the mass of the poor, that is as fellow men; as possessors of capital and consumers of goods, no doubt they greatly benefit them. The magistrate who fines them or sends them to prison; the clergy who marry and bury them, and who teach some of their children; the parish doctors who visit them when sick, are all the representatives of the class they come across, except their employers; but for the most part the working man has very little to do personally with his employer; the clerks, or overseers, or middlemen transact the necessary business between them.

But to come to our personal concern in this state of things. The homes of our gentlewomen have thus been separated for the most part from the homes of the poor, and are too far off to allow of their working amongst them as their common daily business. Three miles off, especially if those miles lie through streets, is an insuperable bar to our knowing them, for the time and strength that might be spent amongst them

would be exhausted in getting to them; and therefore, as they must live where their work is, where their homes are, if we are to labour among them we must go and live there also. The obstacle we are speaking of now is, you will observe, a physical one; such, therefore, as must be met by physical means; no possible amendment of our religious views can stir it, no bolder thoughts of woman's independence can obviate it. No amount of zeal can make a lady's working day much more than six hours long; no self-dependence enable her to walk more than a certain distance, or do more than a certain amount of work at the end of her walk. And further, it is clear if we are to live amongst them, we must do it for the most part by living together. Ladies, of all ages above twenty-five, and of different fortunes, cannot go to solitary lodgings in St. Giles's, nor round the hospitals or dispensaries, or workhouses; nor could they do much good by so setting to work single-handed. Whatever a large religious party may have to say of the evils of sisterhoods, and however keen to detect that dangerous thing wherever ladies live together for any higher object than their own personal convenience; common sense tells us that the protection that is needful for unmarried women under a certain age, going into society of their own rank, is quite as needful, though it may be in a different form, on entering into such works as these; experience tells us that out of a hundred gentlewomen of average abilities

and average zeal, labouring among the poor and ignorant, ninety-nine will do much more, and much more usefully, for doing it under direction and in union, than if left to find out as well as to execute their own work.

Whether called a college, or a home, or a hospital, or nothing at all; there must be, for the real execution of this work, a house where gentlewomen can live together, and arrange their work with each other, and with those who are to work with them or over them: that they may have mutual protection and counsel; live at less expense, and without the harass and anxiety of housekeeping, of balancing wayward accounts, and vexing their spirits, how by cutting off this and that expense they may raise a little surplus for the boundless wants they meet with; when it is hard perhaps already to make both ends balance, or when their strength to work depends on the comfort that is to be cut off: where they may escape the loneliness and cheerlessness of solitary lodgings, and secure a wise division of labour. And to be effectual, these homes, however private, must be in some sort institutions whose existence is recognised, whose objects are known, and whose management is in a measure guaranteed by the names of those who have the direction of them. Can any one call himself a thorough Protestant, who maintains that conditions necessary for the fulfilment of a plain scriptural duty are only possible in connection with the Romish apostasy?

Is it not probable there is something like jesuitry in disguise in such an assertion?

Such homes are needful in every town where a sufficient staff of gentlewomen cannot be found actually residing within reach of the poor, to secure the regularity and permanence of their work. Whilst it is taken up as an extra adornment of our lives, and left to the impulsive zeal of the young, and to the odds and ends of time and strength which they can give whose real business is something else; and whilst the many who come to help are supposed to be conferring a favour, and the one or two who bear the burden of the thing to be under great obligations to them, there is little chance of its proper management. Suppose, for example, an evening school for sewing is opened, to meet for two hours twice a week. At first there are a number of teachers; the classes are formed accordingly, and three or four appointed to each. Some are soon tired, and fall off. Still more are often engaged at home, and cannot come regularly. Then, "there are always enough; the evening is wet, and I have a little cold; I may as well stop at home." Then some are not pleased with the management; forgetting their own share of the business is to teach sewing, mending, and cutting out to their own class; they will have it that the clothes bought be plainer, or prettier, the patterns more or less old fashioned; or that the school be opened with prayer, or without; the books read ought to be of a different kind: and

these either get their own way, and drive off others, or are defeated, and leave themselves. Those who go on steadily soon have too much to do, because it falls on them so irregularly; and if sewing is still taught, one great object of the school is lost. Irregular teachers make irregular scholars: a girl who has to wait half an hour because her teacher is doing the work of four, will come later next time; and acquires no respect for steady, unselfish labour; "they came to please themselves, and now they stay away to please themselves." Little friendliness is felt and no real acquaintance made between such a lady teacher and her scholars; she gains no right to counsel them; they may be impertinent for knowing it, but they do know she does not really care for them, however much she may like a new distraction. And such it is, not a settled duty, but an extra, an occasional thing which is very graceful and benevolent to do, but which she is at perfect liberty to leave undone.

These difficulties and this mistake would be very much obviated, if there were some such centre of work as we have been speaking of, where ladies would always be found who make these works their daily business, and which all who live in the district and wish to be thus employed could gather round; and the time they could attend being known, each call could be provided for beforehand. So that admission to a share in the work would be an honour to be sought by the

associated workers, not a favour granted to the solitary clergyman of the parish.

Much less time and strength also, to say nothing of temper and charity, would be gained, which is now lost by isolated and conflicting labour; if, being thus enabled to work together in different portions of the same main plan, we were so far occupied by the portion entrusted to ourselves as to have no time for opposing or undoing each other's work. The encouragement of working with others; the having a distinct portion of work given us, enabling us to concentrate thought and interest on one object, and the permanent interest arising from being responsible for our own part, may be counted very inferior as Christian motives; but unquestionably they are very real human helps, and there may be more humility in using than faith in rejecting them. But it would be really incredible, without experience, how much of the energy of charitable individuals is wasted by their mutual opposition to each other's work among the poor and ignorant they all desire to help. Some holding up the Prayer-book as the safe guide to salvation: some the Bible only; some, one particular doctrine — some another: infant schools objecting to national ones, day schools to Sunday schools; clothing clubs to soup tickets. Some you find insist, not only on themselves, but also on your doing nothing till the first truths of Christianity are known and professed: some that nothing can or shall be done till drain-

age and washing-houses are set up. Marian, going round with her Bibles and saucepans, is horrified to find others, ladies, visiting in "her" district, who tell the people they need "something more, and something less" than the Bible; and is charged to warn her subscribers to have nothing to do with these heretical ladies. Each working on her own plan, finds it interfered with by another, and where there is abundant room for a hundred labourers, there may not be any for fifty plans. Another very bad effect of the want of a general organisation is the over-help in one known case, and the neglect of half a dozen unknown ones. You may find a sick girl, whose mother is a char-woman, visited by three ladies, who give her different remedies, and by a doctor sent by a fourth; whilst others have sent her books and tracts of every possible variety—some addressed to profane swearers, some suitable to a dying Christian of great experience and long-tried faith, and most calculated to make her think how her own little conversations will look in a tract. And four or five different dishes will come in for her from as many houses, often on the same day: whilst in the next lane, a journeyman bricklayer, laid prostrate with rheumatic fever, with four hungry children, and a wife near her confinement, has not a creature to go near him but the ignorant old woman in the garret above. The work done in this way reminds one of nothing so much as of a village choir of old days, when each man sung

and each instrument sounded lustily, but each on his own account. Each helper might be doing good by himself, but together it is almost worse than having none at all.

Again, if instruction is to be given to the workers themselves (and the necessity of this has been clearly proved by the writers alluded to above), it is difficult to see how they can avail themselves of it without such a home in which they might live whilst receiving it. They who have time to make these works their business, and not mere play, find at once they must have special instruction for most of them to do them well. The younger they are the more they need this, and the less possible will it be for them to go up to London and live some months in lodgings, in order to attend lectures, workhouses, and hospitals, schools, and classes, as learners. The majority could not afford it; if they could, who would admit such scholars to any charge in public institutions? Yet it is only by practising the work under the eye of those who have already acquired it, that we can really gain the knowledge we want,—can learn how to set about it, how to undermine its difficulties, how to carry it on. What can be taught in lectures, *might* be learnt from books at home, though less compendiously, and though it would be hard to say in what books; but how to apply our rules or principles to each varying individual case, and readiness to meet each as it arises, can only be taught by seeing the thing done, and doing it under the eye of a mistress in the art.

Without some security, such as these colleges or homes might afford, that the work undertaken by ladies will really be done,—that there will be no opposition or interference between the workers themselves, and that those who undertake it are in some measure capable of performing it; it would be unwarrantable, even absurd, for the responsible managers of charities to entrust any portion of their real work to voluntary lady visitors: and still less could Government entrust any of the management of female prisons to the zeal of the volunteers who chanced to reside in their neighbourhood. Though it is true, that our having had no work and no responsibility is a very sufficient reason for the too frequent want of sober common sense and perseverance amongst us, and of our occasional failures in that practical justice which leads a person, whilst doing his own work as well as he can, to acknowledge the right of other people to do their work in their own way; and though the having a real right work to do would be the best, if not the only remedy for changeableness and narrow-mindedness, yet it is no reason at all for giving us the work, until we prove ourselves capable of carrying it on, and are in a position to secure its being permanently carried on, that it may not fall through when its first undertakers drop off.

Such homes would afford the means of carrying on many of those works which are now almost impossible to us, from the want of places and oppor-

tunity for them. The servants needed in them might be mainly those young girls for whom it is now so difficult to find first places, where they will really be taught to be servants, and where their religious and moral education shall not come to an utter standstill. The burden of teaching young servants can very rarely be (wisely) undertaken by the mistress of a large family, with only a moderate income; and in more affluent houses, it can never be safely attempted, unless the servants are thoroughly well known and trustworthy. In orphan asylums or industrial schools for servants, the expense of which is an insuperable bar to their general application, the girls have not enough house-work to do, and that little is not of the same kind as is needed in a gentleman's family. But in these homes nearly every kind of servants' work would be required, and might be thoroughly taught under the immediate superintendence of one of the resident ladies, with the aid of one or two older and good servants. Each home might afford work for a small cooking school, whilst the best scholars, promoted to be servants, would have abundant opportunity to learn cooking for the family and the sick and poor, house and laundry work, waiting, the care of linen and stores, mending, or attendance on invalids, &c.: and one or two of these arts, *well* taught, to a well-trained girl, for a couple of years, would fit her to be a useful, handy servant; and as such are never in want of places so long as they keep any sort of character,

it would be, humanly speaking, a provision for life for her. And though the actual number so educated might be small, it would be accumulative; by being made a reward for their parents' care, or for their own good conduct at school, its influence would be still further spread; and servants so trained would be on the whole better and more willing teachers of other young servants, in their future situations. Smaller homes of this kind might offer places for those who have been struggling to regain a lost character in our refuges, for whom it is so hard now to find any safe situation at all.

Many mistresses of families are able and anxious to give such relief to the sick and needy as they can spare; children's clothes, kitchen food, &c., turning to account what would otherwise be wasted; who have no time nor opportunity to find out for themselves where it is most needed: they might obtain the information they want, at once, were there such a home in their district, and would be secured from all giving to the same people, or could find at once well-informed almoners to make the most of their little stores. The poor women themselves would know where to find their friends, who now shrink from taking a toilsome walk to call at a great house, and risk being treated as beggars by the bustling servants; or to stand waiting amidst strangers, with a heart aching for the sick one left helpless at home, whilst the maid is taking her time about seeing whether Miss can be

troubled or not. Have not many of us found we have lost some poor creature for ever, because at the moment of her need some such trifle as this kept her from seeking our help?

Of the private classes of scholars grown too old for Sunday schools, &c., who might still be taught, if there were a convenient room, not a school, for them, we must speak hereafter: but one kind of these Sunday classes, those for teaching young shop-women, would be more effectually carried on in such a house than in any private one. The class is in town a very numerous one; and their temptations are often very great. If it be true, as I fear it still too often is, that many of them are sent out on Sundays for a whole holiday, whether they have friends to go to or not, it is clear they want more than an hour's instruction in a class; those who have no safe friends to go home to, might in these homes have a quiet warm room for their own reading or writing on the Sunday, when not at church; and if they could get a meal there also, a warm cup of tea even, it might help, if all accounts of their lives are not false, to make that day so unwonted a rest and comfort to them, that even their paying for it would not involve the managers in the sin of trafficking on the Sunday. But it is obvious this cannot be done in private houses, nor anywhere, without some control over the giddy, and protection of the quiet and timid, such as the presence of their friendly lady teacher would secure.

Such a home should contain separate apartments for the residents, and for those who come for a time to learn, with one or two common sitting-rooms; it would require also some large room that could be used as a class-room, and fitted up with the machinery for teaching; and one room always set apart for business, such as seeing the poor who come for help or advice; and for persons calling on business, either giving or seeking information. In this room should be a good map of the whole district, in which should be numbered each street and lane, each place of worship, school-room, hospital, dispensary, &c., and every division into minor districts should be plainly marked. A list of these districts, &c., numbered in the same way, and containing opposite to each number the names of the visitors employed there, both in and out of the home; the days on which each visitor is engaged, the vacancies that need filling up, and the heads of each department of work; with the amount of help wanted, from the weekly report of the sick who need visiting or food; the number of teachers needed in each evening school, Sunday school, &c.—would show at a glance what is being done, and what needs doing. The list of the destitute sick, for instance, made out every week, would contain their names and abodes, specifying what each has been ordered by the medical man of the dispensary or parish; each name crossed out as the charge of that person is undertaken by one or

another; or the actual relief given would be recorded if insufficient, as it too often must be. Such a list might be made with tolerable accuracy, from the lists of out-patients of the hospital, of the dispensary, the parish doctor, and the relieving officers; from the information which can be obtained from the clergyman of the district, Scripture readers, school teachers, especially of the ragged school, and the visitors themselves. And such information, thus collected and arranged for use, would be available for all, whether working independently, or in connection with the home; on the understanding always, that those who avail themselves of it for the direction of their private charity, should mark the relief given to any on the list by themselves, the name of the donor being unnecessary. This would put it into our power to avoid the monstrous evils now produced by careless and indiscriminate charity, and would diminish at least the mischiefs that arise from the neglect of unknown destitution.

Great question has been raised as to the rules and government of such a home, great doubts as to whether we can live together in peace and obedience; as to the connection of the society with the Church, and its ministers, and as to the religious rules to be observed. Ladies forced together by any non-natural principles or exaggerated feeling, and having little to do, will never be likely to live in peace. No set of people

would. But voluntarily living in the same house because engaged in similar pursuits, and each having plenty of her own work to do — this is a very different thing; peace is the *natural* consequence of having nothing to quarrel about, and having enough to do is the real remedy for that meddling spirit which cannot help judging another's servant: the mutual need of each other's help and sympathy would make peace almost a necessity. But the necessity for obedience to one head arises from an entirely different purpose and aim than the one advocated now; and whatever other objects it would effect, it would defeat those we have been speaking of. I fear women never can rule their equals justly or wisely; but if they could, what we need for the accomplishment of this work, are the best efforts of individual minds and hearts; and to get this, or anything like it, we must provide the freest possible scope for individual powers. The management of the home and the education of its servants should be a separate division of the work, undertaken by one or two of the older resident ladies, with such helpers as wish to learn it. And if two or three years' probation was required before a lady became a regular "resident," — during which time she could help the others as needed, or as she wished to learn, she would certainly find out which department she liked best, and that would almost always be the one she is most fitted for. If accepted for the work she has chosen by the

managers of that institution—be it a hospital, a school, a prison, her work would be assigned to her by them; she would be independent of the other ladies. Those who come to learn must work under the direction of the lady to whom the department in which they wish to practise has been intrusted, but no further control would be needful. To secure the best work educated persons can give, however strictly their work is defined and limited, they must be left with as much liberty as possible to its actual performance. The officers of these institutions, whether they seek our aid or admit us to help, still keep the right of accepting or declining the services of those who offer themselves: if they accept them, it is still their business to give, and to limit the authority of the visitors; to say exactly what they want done, and what must be left alone. How the work thus defined is to be done must be left mainly to the doers.

So also when clergymen admit us to teach in their schools: the teacher's authority, derived from them, may be resumed by them; but no others, in or out of the home, have any need to interfere. If the work is not well done, those by whom the authority to do it was given can always point out what they wish, altering or put a stop to it altogether if they deem it needful. Good sense, and common gentlemanly feeling will, I am persuaded, on the whole, secure this justice to the volunteers whose assistance has

been accepted, — that they shall be plainly and exactly told what is wanted, and in what they are mistaking their way. As to their own personal domestic arrangements, as people do now live together with very tolerable comfort, though without entire agreement, it is difficult to see why we should not do the same when united in pursuing different parts of one common object, — when more employed, more responsible for our individual conduct, and more independent in our own special work than at present.

It will be a great blessing if all in such a home can join in the same religious worship, as will generally be the case: but if they cannot, it will be still a blessing that they can all unite in that labour which is also worship. Compliance with necessary household arrangements is no more than all unmarried gentlewomen are accustomed to yield. Nor can I imagine why we should interfere with each other's taste in dress: each of us can set a *silent* example of good taste to the rest: but ordinary persons, going quietly about their ordinary business, need no uniform to mark them out as different from the rest of their class.

Whilst we continue to be human beings, living on the earth, there will be always difference of opinion, narrowness of mind, blunders in practice, faults and failures of every kind. Wherever any number of persons are engaged in the same object, there will be some few silly persons, some self-willed, some with an inconvenient twist. The

question is not, will such homes as we have proposed be perfect within and without, perpetual successes? but, is there anything in the plan to increase those failures, or to unfit the inmates for the social life of their own class? If there is not, it must be obvious they would offer considerably increased facilities for doing that portion of our Christian duty which relates to the suffering and ignorant. Whatever faults we have to hinder us in this, we have now; increased power to fulfil it cannot increase them.

When the plan has already been tried (I mean of gentlewomen going to reside together where their work lay), they have generally gone for a portion of the year only. In the refuge at Bussage, among those of the teachers of the working women's classes who do not reside in London, and I believe in King's College Hospital, this is the case. Some arrangement of this kind would be absolutely necessary for most. In spite of all that has been said of the desolate estate of single gentlewomen, I am convinced a very small portion indeed are absolutely without home and family ties, which must not be broken. And it would be most advisable, for the health of all, and for the efficiency of their work, that there should be at least a considerable break in it: to be continually teaching, we must be continually learning: however, to do both at once is more than most of us have strength for. It cannot be too often insisted on, that bodily health, good spirits,

and that freshness of mind and feeling, which occasional enjoyment of intelligent and pleasant society, general reading, and change of scene are the easiest means of giving, are indispensable in carrying on this kind of work. This is the great evil of nunneries, that their inmates get perforce into one narrow groove, and dwindle away in it all through their lives. It is especially needed by women, who are mostly too anxious for the individual success of their labours, and with whom over-anxiety brings on that sort of nervousness which shows itself by making mountains of molehills and finds discouragement everywhere; which is sure no good at all has been done, because a girl has been saucy or thoughtless, and so lost her place, or one we thought improving has been found deceiving us in some little manner. And without this morbid state, the continual real disappointments, the constant suffering, the perversity of evil, the frequent misjudgings, and occasional opposition that will be met with, require such relief of change. Whilst we look for strength to bear them from a higher source; whilst we know the grace that is sufficient for much harder trials than these; still, as long as we live in bodies such as ours, we must comply with the laws of their health, under penalty of making ourselves useless.

For those who are without family homes, and without means for procuring such change for themselves, it should be provided: when a suffi-

cient number of sea-side convalescent hospitals are established in connection with the great town hospitals, such a provision will be obvious. To make the plan complete, there should also be some quiet country home for those helpers who, by advancing age or broken health, are compelled to give up their more active work. Rules for such a home would be needless: that they who have passed the days of their strength in working together, or at least for the same object, should pass the resting time of old age together, and not be left in solitude to strangers, is the only fact needful for their regulation.

# CHAP. XI.

## WHAT WE CAN DO FOR THEM BY TEACHING.

IN DAY SCHOOLS: READING LESSON.—RAGGED SCHOOLS.—SUNDAY SCHOOLS: IMPORTANCE OF THEM; OUR CHIEF MEANS OF GIVING PERSONAL CHRISTIAN TEACHING.—WOMEN THE BEST TEACHERS OF RELIGION FOR CHILDREN.—THEY AFFORD OPPORTUNITY FOR PROLONGED INSTRUCTION, AND ALLOW OF A REAL EDUCATION BEING GIVEN. — NO BURDEN TO THE SCHOLARS: THE DAY OF REST. — IMPORTANCE OF THOROUGH TEACHING. — CHOICE AND PREPARATION OF LESSONS: HOW TO GIVE THEM.—BIBLE CLASSES. —SUNDAY CLASSES FOR SHOPWOMEN: THEIR PECULIAR NEED. — OBJECT OF SUCH CLASSES: THEIR BUSINESS, DRESS, AND COURTSHIPS.—OF NIGHT SCHOOLS: CAUTION IN MANAGING THEM. SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION.—MISTAKES IN SELECTING THEM.— MISTAKES IN THE LANGUAGE USED IN TEACHING.—SINGING AND DRAWING CLASSES.—SEWING SCHOOLS, AND PLAN FOR MANAGING THEM.—MOTHERS' CLASSES.—EXPENSES OF A NIGHT SCHOOL.

"Sow in the morn thy seed,
At eve hold not thy hand;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed,
Broad-cast it o'er the land:
Thou knowest not which may grow,
The late or early sown:—
Go forth then everywhere."

THE larger Government or National day schools, especially in towns, have generally so sufficient a staff of teachers and pupil teachers, that they are better without visitor teachers: in smaller and poorer ones a little assistance from a lady in this way is often useful: its utility depending very much, however, on such particulars as, Do the clergy-

men or managers wish for such help? can you make it an agreeable help to the master or mistress? Can you be very punctual to your day, and minute? Can you teach that lesson better than the regular teacher? or does he need such help in order to attend properly to another part of the school? There may be a few more advanced scholars in the first class, to whom drawing lessons, or one in cutting out clothes, and fixing work, &c., would be very useful, which yet the mistress cannot give without neglecting the less advanced. Again, the Scripture lesson with the younger classes, when without such help it must of necessity be given by a young pupil teacher, might very wisely be undertaken by a lady visitor. Generally, however, it is in the reading lessons that extra teachers are needed: for if the classes are large, twenty-five or thirty, there is scarcely time enough to practise each child sufficiently in reading; and good reading is too often a thing not attained by pupil teachers. As this is a point of considerable importance, on which their whole future (intellectual) use of their schooling depends, — for if they are not taught to read before leaving school with facility and pleasure, they will soon cease to read more than they can help — the following hints may be useful to beginners. They are drawn from many sources; none are original, and all have been tested by experience.

In a parish school, celebrated throughout the district by the inspector's eulogium on the superior

style in which the children read, the master attributed his success mainly to his practice of never allowing the boys to read a sentence till he had first read it over to them. In doing this you must read entirely by the stops, more slowly than in any common reading, pronouncing each word completely, with an open mouth, but never loud, clear and distinct, and using very slight emphasis. It is so unnatural for children to read just as they speak; they are, happily, so unconscious how they speak, that the attempt to make them read with marked expression always produces a miserable tone, or a rant: it is, I am sure, natural for children to read in a sing-song tone, and nothing but imitation will cure it. I doubt also whether boys' voices become subject to a conscious will in speaking till they are grown up: girls will catch your emphasis and tone much more quickly. Having read over the first sentence yourself, the first child in the class reads it again: if there is a word in it you think they do not understand, ask its meaning, and either repeat the clause with the explanation substituted for the word, or if the class is sufficiently advanced, let one of the children do so. When the whole lesson has been thus read through, draw out by questions a short account of what they have been reading; and then closing your own book, with your finger in the place for instant reference, let them read it over again, enforcing a strict attention to the stops, and correctness in pronouncing each word. If

you have not tried this plan before, you will probably be at once struck with the fact that your class read with their mouths almost shut, so that you can scarcely hear them; that they are apt also to alter the prepositions, to leave out or put in the plural "esses;" to slur over or leave altogether unpronounced a third part of the longer words, and to drop the last word or two of each sentence. Do not allow them to spell the words they do not recollect unless it be one they can readily make out by the syllables; but even for this, if the class is large, there is no time to spare: children get into a habit of spelling words, simply to save themselves the trouble of attention and thought, when they really know them: if they must stop to spell, make them spell it over silently to themselves. The sound of the letters is no help to the sound of the word: how can a child's enunciating slowly and singingly these syllables,—double you, aitch, oh, ess, ee, enable her to remember the syllable whose? This habit spoils all reading, and teaches spelling to no purpose: indeed, if time allows, the spelling and reading lessons should be kept quite distinct. When therefore a child hesitates at a word, pronounce it distinctly yourself at once, never allow them to correct, or tell each other a word, without an express sign from yourself: if you have told them a word two or three times already, and a child again stops at it, make a sign for hands to be put up by those who think they know it, and point out one of them to tell it. Five minutes

may be usefully spent in their reading over a few sentences together; pronouncing each word as with one voice, and counting the stops aloud, in this way: "Our, vegetables, *one*, too, *one*, must, be, fit, for, use, *one*, *two*, here, are, cabbages, *one*, and, peas, *one*, and, beans, *one*, *two*, *three*." Or if they are capable of it, let them read a paragraph word by word: the first child reads "our;" the second "vegetables;" the third "too," and so on round the class, without allowing any more interval between each word than there would be if one child were reading slowly. The first teaches them to mind the stops and to pronounce each word distinctly and without hesitation; the second chiefly practises attention; it wakes up a listless class wonderfully. The reading lessons in verse, when they know all the words, and have mastered the sense, should always be read over by the whole class altogether, verse by verse after their teacher; without counting the stops, which the rhythm and your example will sufficiently teach them to observe.

In ragged schools there is much more for you to do; for want of funds to pay regular teachers, they are often mainly dependent on voluntary ones. The children also have to be sought for and brought in, and require to be tamed by gentle and friendly teachers; they cannot be put under the discipline of a regular school, where the children are sent by parents, and where forty have learnt to move and work as one. Good counsel should be taken before establishing one of these schools, as

in some places they have been entirely filled with children from the national schools, sent for the sake of saving their weekly payment.

I fear Sunday schools are in danger of being as much undervalued now as at one time they were over-rated. Persons speak as though day schools were likely soon to supersede them, and as though in themselves they are an evil. It is scarcely too much to say that what knowledge of Christianity there is among our adult working population is mainly owing to Sunday schools, and to their having Bibles, which has very much resulted from these schools; and the late extension and improvement of our day schools has not, so far, at all superseded, though it has lightened the work of the Sunday schools; it is no longer necessary to teach reading in the Sunday school; and those who are old enough to remember the time and toil wasted in teaching reading on one day in seven; the number of months spent in getting through the first pages of the primer, when Sunday after Sunday the d o do, n o t not, s i n sin, had to be begun again, to be again forgotten in the week; or how hard it was to explain a few verses of Scripture, when each word had to be slowly spelt through for the answer,—well know what an aid this is to the efficiency of the Sunday school. But still the personal religious teaching needed by the children of the working poor, the teaching of those truths which Christ came to reveal, of God's love to them, of their own wants, of the immediate connection of what God has done and is doing for

them, with their own hearts, their daily lives, their words and their works; this they need as much as ever, and it is still to the Sunday schools we must look as the means of imparting it to them. For, first, this is teaching which cannot be given rightly to a large class of children, eager only to thrust out their hands and win the honour of being called up to give the right answer; and if they sit still and simply listen, scarcely any will be attending. You must gather the children round you, and get their eyes fixed on yours, and speak, not as a teacher giving a lesson to scholars, but as an elder brother or sister, having the same wants, the same difficulties, the same privileges, and the same Father.

And next, these things cannot be taught by the young boys and girls who are our pupil teachers. Indeed, there are not many men who can teach them well to children; for most, when they speak solemnly, get above their comprehension,—they cannot speak at once with childish simplicity and child-like reverence. Perhaps a man must not only have a "natural gift" for teaching children (that is, must be fond of them, and used to talk to them), but also be thoroughly educated, to translate his thoughts into sufficiently simple words, without losing them; and this our schoolmasters cannot yet be, even if they had time to give the daily Scripture lesson to every class themselves; whilst to educated women it is the natural mode of expression. Again, it will not be given in our

day schools, as a general rule, because it is not the sort of teaching that tells at the examination; it awakens thoughts and feelings in the child that cannot come out quick and clear as answer should to question. Inspectors seek facts, not truths; and rightly. Any one can tell if a child has been taught its Scripture history correctly; but who shall venture to measure out its conception of an infinite truth? And yet the direct and personal teaching of these truths is the more needful to these children, because of that indirect training up in them, which all children should have at home, they have very little or none at all.

Then the Sunday school affords the most efficient and most generally attainable remedy we have for the early removal of children from our day schools. This early removal is a fact, I cannot call it altogether an evil, which it is of little use to fight against. Whilst our poor are as poor as at present, their children must have to work as soon as they can. My own idea, I confess, is that they ought to do so; that it does them more good proudly to bring home their 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.*, and to add it to their weary mother's store on a Saturday, than to get into fractions and physical geography. Boys whose future work must be altogether unintellectual, are not always happier for having been kept at school till they have acquired a real love for learning. I have known some, taken from school at thirteen or fourteen, who were perfectly miserable in the dull drudgery to which they had to turn.

But if children, having learned reading, writing, and simple arithmetic—the mechanical parts of education, that is—are taken from school at ten or eleven to work, and every Sunday are gathered again in the Sunday school, they will not lose the art of reading, and as they grow older, may be improved both in this, and in intelligence and thought, at least so far as will put it in their power to teach themselves when growing up. Combined as a good Sunday school always should be with an evening school once or twice in the week, and with a lending library, their writing, summing, and general knowledge may be also kept up, and improved till they are old enough to appreciate their value and profit by their use. Without such help, leaving school so young, all they have learnt is very much forgotten. With it, the means of providing them with a real sound education are secured; for it must not be left out of consideration, that the Bible, the main source of all the instruction given in these schools, contains more food for thought, calls for the exercise of more intelligence, and teaches more, and more universally, practical wisdom in a more simple and directly applicable form,—I may not say than any other school book, but rather than all other books in the world. The young man or woman who has learned to study it, and to seek out the meaning of one part by comparing it with another, may go on for ever learning more and more, exercising every mental power; it contains means for

a never-ending education of mind, heart, and spirit.

Sunday schools afford us the opportunity of giving this really sound education; and with their supplementary classes actually supply, if not as good an education as we may desire, certainly the best that can practically be attained for them.* For the many who never do go to day schools after infancy, it is needless to say how important Sunday schools must be; but it will be well for us to remember that their time for learning being so short, the instruction we give them then must not only be *about* the most important things, but also the very truest and clearest we can give, in order that, little as it must be in amount, the information may still be something worthy of the name of education. Our day schools provide instruction for children between the ages of three and eleven. Our Sunday schools, in manufacturing districts, do actually give them religious instruction from the age of five to eighteen. If for those we think we can hardly get too able instructors, what should these have? But this is understating the case as it relates to girls; out of 18,700 girls attending day schools in 1856, only 1,324 were above ten. Whilst in Sunday schools girls often stay till they marry; in one I knew well, they have come after being married, at the age of twenty-five or twenty-six. It is said that at

* On this and other points relating to the education possible in these schools, see *The Progressive Questioning Book* (Seeley and Burnside, 1842).

Preston, a class of two hundred young men, and those mostly youths who, in their own language, had been "a bad lot living at a loose end," thought no shame to walk in the Sunday-school procession on their feast day. What has been done can be done.

It is however, said, that Sunday is given to us and our children for a day of rest, and that to shut them up in a dull school-room, learning dry collects, and saying catechisms on Sundays, when they have to work all the week in close factories, or dingy homes, or are wearied with hard labour, is to take from them a necessary of health, is harmful and cruel. Perhaps it will hardly be credited by objectors, who prove the dulness of collects by their own dreary experience, that the children themselves so like to come to their Sunday schools they cannot be kept away; and yet this is true of a fair majority. If only those came whose parents make them come, there might possibly be a fourth of our present number; and there might be a few boys of thirteen or fourteen, and a few girls of fifteen or sixteen. Parental authority will not stretch so far as that in many families.

Nor is there anything strangely good in their choosing to come to these schools. To those who have had no other schooling, "Sunday school" is often the great event of the week; often I have known them come without breakfast, rather than come late: "afraid of being punished?" they need only stay away altogether to be free from all chance

of punishment. Often on inquiring after an absentee, the mother has told how she "was forced to keep her at home, and she cried after her school all day till I was fretted with hearing on her." Often have middle-aged women, mothers of grown-up families told us, "Ah, sir, those were the happiest days of *my* life, when we used to go to the Sunday school." And to those who have been taken from the day school for work, it is a very great pleasure to get back on Sundays to their former companions, and with something less of discipline, and more of friendliness, to renew in part the lessons they used daily to learn. The rest which young things like is not doing nothing, but change of employment. And to be one day in the week clean, and in their Sunday clothes, in a clean warm room, sitting with their companions round a teacher who is a friend as well as a master, and a lady or a gentleman possibly also, reading a few verses, and exercising their memories and their thoughts, instead of their fingers; learning a hymn or collect, and listening to some story, illustrated to the younger ones by a picture, to the elder by their talking it over; and then all joining in singing to some well-known tune, this is a very complete change from the noisy work and bustle, the rudeness, scoldings, and dirt of their week-day life; if they played about the lanes and streets,—if they walked about in the country all day, it would not be half so great a change; their companions, their thoughts, their talk, and their amusement would be very

nearly the same then on all the seven days. Nor is religious instruction necessarily dull to all; but this is so purely personal a question, that no one can argue from his own experience what another's will be.

However, I am far from saying the time spent in these schools might not be more carefully proportioned to the circumstances of the children and young people who attend them; and not solely ruled by the vast importance of the teaching that has to be given in them, or by the supposed necessity of dismissing all the classes at the same hour, in fine and in wet weather, and all at once. We should take great care not to teach them to associate religious books with weariness, and holy lessons with wishing the sermon would end. Whatever difference there may be amongst us as to how the Sabbath is to be kept holy, there can hardly be any as to the meaning of the other part of the command, to rest. Certainly rest is not fatigue, rest is not weariness. If the sabbatical law is still binding on us, then it is broken, in spirit and in deed, by any employment which prevents its being a day of rest to the whole man, to body and soul. If it is not, still this "rest" remains as one great part of the blessing intended for us and our children by the institution of the Lord's Day.

That it is a rest, in its true literal sense, for these children to come to our Sunday schools, I am sure. Whether it is also rest for them, at all

ages, to attend two full services and sermons, as well as school; whether it be also rest, for the young and active, living in a town to get a walk in the country; rest for labouring children to have a quiet time at home as well as at school; rest for those who are overworked all the week to get more sleep on the Sunday; these are questions not to be dogmatised about, but to be decided by experience: whether the observance of the Lord's Day be merely a duty bound on us by command, or a great blessing provided for us, its two parts cannot be contrary to each other; keeping it holy no more diminishes the full force of the command to do *no manner* of work upon it, than the blessing of rest takes away from the blessing of keeping it holy. Whatever tends to save life by restoring health, or by compensating for the evil done to health during the six working days, is either commanded as our duty, or permitted us as our blessing and privilege on that day. But it is not so much the losing of this blessed rest that is to be feared, as the hardening of our scholars' consciences, and the destroying their faith in God's goodness, when we lay upon them sabbatical rules of our own invention, and make them believe that what they know to be pleasant is wicked, and that only is right on the Lord's Day which they feel to be a weariness. So they sin against their own consciences by doing what God has not made a sin; and taking their rest without the controlling and sanctifying sense that it is God's gift, and

with the persuasion they are sinning in taking it, it becomes self-willed and truly corrupting.*

If, then, it be true that an important part of the teaching and education of our working classes from ten to twenty depends mainly on Sunday schools, we must remember that the actual teaching given is, to a very great extent, dependent on ourselves, and left in our hands; and we ought well to consider what sort of teaching it is we give, and what it is worth to our scholars. It has been said of common teaching, that it does not so much matter what is taught, as how it is taught; but in this case both are important. Teachers strangely enough seem often to forget this. "I take it the faults in the lessons we give will be faults of arrangement. As Sunday-school teachers we may presume we are not likely to make mistakes in doctrine," was said by a very intelligent teacher. I think I have seldom heard so painful a remark as this—teaching portions of infinite truth, knowing so little of them ourselves, and that little so onesidedly, so imperfectly, and yet not likely to make mistakes!

If we wish to keep our scholars when they cease

* Will God be *very* angry with me if I just throw one stone into the sea to-day, mamma? said a little girl of three.

*Q.* How are we to employ such part of this day as is not spent in the house of God? — *A.* In reading the Word of God, and other religious books, and in holy meditation and prayer. — *Stillingfleet's Catechism*, Christian Knowledge Society.

"The seventh day is the rest of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt do *no manner* of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter."

to be children, we must take care we have something more, and requiring more thought, to teach them; to draw out their own powers of observation, reflection, and reasoning, to give them more knowledge, more food for thought, and more information; this, and not attempts to rouse up their feelings about the first truths they have heard from us Sunday after Sunday, ever since they were in the school, this is to educate them in the truths of God's word. And we must behave towards them as to voluntary and growing up scholars; there is a courteous as well as kind manner to be noticed in some of our best day-school teachers, which might well be adopted in some Sunday schools. It is most unpleasant to see girls, who, if not women, are at least as tall as women, standing up to say a lesson for half an hour, whilst the teacher sits at her ease; or to hear them publicly reprimanded. Rules about dress, taking places, punishments for lateness, or inattention, are equally out of place among the elder classes.

You should never give a lesson to any class, however young, in a Sunday school without preparing it beforehand, at least so far as to know what is to be the subject of your lesson, how far it will be well to go into it, what passages should be looked out in explanation of it; how you will show them its connection with the truth they have already been taught; and what lesson it affords for the every-day faith and practice of your particular scholars. A doctrine you do not yourself under-

stand you had better say nothing about, except in Scripture words; for confused teaching is always uninteresting, and here may be dangerous. We must teach according to the measure of our knowledge, *i. e.* what we ourselves believe to be true, but it is not necessary we should teach as though our interpretations were infallible; still less as though we knew the whole of the matter. To give them anything like an idea of the extent of our ignorance on some of these points, would do more to guard them from being led into error than any other course whatever. It is not necessary to initiate them into the religious controversies which form unhappily too often the major part of our own theology; but they often are already acquainted with them, and you will not always be able to avoid them; in all cases, however, to know and practise the truth, is the surest safeguard against error. The great facts of the New Testament, those summed up in the Apostles' Creed, are the doctrines it concerns them to know; and as revealed in the life and works of our Lord, illustrated in His parables, and explained in the epistles, will afford us an endless store of lessons immediately applicable, and of infinite importance to our scholars, to their daily conduct, their inward faith, love, and obedience; and it is not needful to waste the short time they have for learning, by teaching them how very wrong other people are, unless they are actually exposed to false teaching. Generally, you will find it more interesting to dwell

upon a short passage, going into it so fully and minutely as that your scholars may carry away some definite and vivid thoughts on it, than to pass rapidly over so long a chapter that they glean only a general idea of what it is about; for general views of truth, or of facts, are to the young and uneducated, vague, and soon forgotten; and several subjects glanced at in succession are very confusing to them: hence come those stereotyped answers, brought out on every subject, to any question from which a very little experience will enable you to tell exactly the class of truths they have been used to hear, and a very little reflection will show you how parrot-like and unmeaning all those words have become to them. Such will be the fate of every truth, or class of truths, which are not made realities to them by being brought down to their daily life and real experience; you may change their teaching and dwell upon quite the other side of the truth; you may change their answers from high church to low, from evangelical to moral, from spiritual to muscular Christianity, but until this link is so clear to them, that they can answer out of their own experience, the stereotype character is still maintained.

Having the subject on which you are going to teach them, and its practical connection with themselves, thus clear before you, you must be prepared to give that lesson, not in the way of remarks, still less of a lecture, but by questions, so put as to guide your scholars' thoughts to the principal

points of the passage, and to enable them to draw out its meaning, and to discover their own interest in that meaning, and to give both in their own words. Questions which state the truth, and require only a "yes" or "no," though sometimes unavoidable, are inefficient: you will generally find that though answered rightly, the child does not know what the question was.

The answer given may often be partly right, and yet not at all the one you wanted to get, leading quite to a different side of the truth. A teacher should be sufficiently familiar with the subject to be able to follow up the thought thus started; if you are not, you will infallibly secure their attention and interest by saying as much. A clever wrong answer also continually affords an opportunity for a clearness and exactness in explaining the matter, that would not have occurred to you of itself, and may arrest the minds of your scholars so as quite to recompense you for setting aside your intended lesson to follow out the new thought or chain of thoughts, so making them draw out their own lesson, and be the agents of their own instruction. You must also be prepared with a simple and clear meaning of the words used in the lesson, and to give this in such words as they would themselves use; very often the explanation is as much in an unknown tongue as the word explained. A lady teaching a reading lesson in a National school, was astonished at being told that "dice" meant "little cubs at play." On in-

quiry it appeared it was the little girl's free translation of the "explanation" given of the word in her spelling book—"small cubes used in gaming." Lastly, to counteract the unavoidably fragmentary character of Sunday-school instruction, your whole course of lessons, Sunday after Sunday, should be clearly connected together. It is better to go regularly through a gospel, or an epistle, than to take a few verses here, or a chapter there; and whilst every lesson has in itself a distinct purpose and subject of its own, each lesson, and each new truth you can bring them, must be clearly connected in their minds with what they already know; whilst the Sunday lesson should be connected by every possible link to their week-day work; else, those two, being so entirely different in outward circumstances, will appear to them as quite distinct things, which have nothing whatever to do with each other, their Sunday precepts referring to Sundays, and their week-day practices to week days.

The Sunday-school education is generally completed with a Bible class: though there are many of these unconnected with any school. They differ from the school, chiefly in meeting once in the day for one or two hours; and they should be held in a room by themselves; they are intended for grown-up persons. If it is difficult to keep your scholars in the Sunday school when growing up—from sixteen to twenty (which depends much on the local fashion); you will often be able to draft them off into such a Bible class, which must never be con-

sidered as going to school; and generally, those of the Sunday scholars who have been confirmed, especially if communicants, or employed part of the day as teachers, should be promoted to one of these classes. The name implies the immediate object of such a class, *i.e.* to help its members to read and study the Bible for themselves, by studying it together with them. In towns there are many, of different ranks, who may be gathered into such a class. The daughters of shopkeepers and persons in trade might here learn how to help and teach others, and especially their own servants: they know too little of the destitution and ignorance of what they call "the lower orders," to be interested in the efforts making for their benefit: it is our business to make friends of them, and to raise them by helping them to raise others. In the country, farm servants, and other young servants, can often attend an evening or afternoon class of this kind, if they are not frightened away by being mixed with those who are better scholars, *i.e.* readers, than themselves. It is very important to attend to this if we wish to secure their attendance, and these bad readers, men as well as maids, are perhaps better taught by us than by gentlemen. In most cases the Bible class, if there is but one, is undertaken by the clergyman; if we have to take it, we must ourselves advance in knowledge as our scholars do, must study more, think more, collect wider stores, and learn to bring them out with more care and readiness.

There is one class of young women, however, in towns, so much alone in the world, so undefended, and in such great need of womanly counsel and help, that we can hardly consent to give them up even for the sake of their having abler teaching than ours. I mean our young shopwomen, milliners' apprentices, and workwomen. Separated from their own relations as much as domestic servants, they are too often without their compensation—a safe home; and are busily employed the whole week through in a work which has perhaps as little as work possibly can have to raise and improve them. Many of them are subjected to that terrible cause of moral degradation among young women, the incessant jading of over-work; worse than idle words are resorted to sometimes to make the fatigue endurable. Too many of them are in the situation so vividly described by Mrs. Gaskell in "Ruth." It is still a general custom, especially among the smaller establishments, to expect them to spend Sundays at their own homes; though many of them have none at all, or none in reach. Indeed their employers, as weary and more careworn than themselves, need the rest of Sunday too much for themselves, and the quiet day in their suburban home is little less than absolutely needful. I suspect the smaller shops can scarcely afford to support their shop-people through an idle day. In larger establishments it is much more easy to care for them, and in very many they are most kindly and thoughtfully treated. Yet even in

these, the unceasing employment through the day, and the impossibility of supporting it without some fresh air, have compelled the employers to send all their people out at ten o'clock at night for a walk in the streets. Still their friends and counsellors are amongst themselves only; they have no personal guidance, often no one to apply to in trouble; little instruction; and whilst exposed to many temptations, if they fall, it is for life. They must go at once, and going without a character, what can become of them? Many of the inmates of our Refuges have been shopwomen. A lady writes, "I am thankful to say I have met none of my Bible class there as yet."

Mr. G. Wagner, of Brighton, collected a good many of these young women in a kind of Bible class, which he entrusted to the care of some ladies who each undertook to receive a certain number of them in their own houses, for a couple of hours every Sunday; and most thankful many have been to attend, and most useful has their guardianship proved to them. It is not only the value of the actual religious teaching that can thus be given them; it is also the refreshment of a complete change of ideas and conversation; it is the higher tone of thought and principle thus introduced into their lives by real intercourse with a more experienced and educated woman; it is the safeguard a young woman has, in knowing she has a friend to look to if she needs advice or kind sympathy, or approbation; that there is one per-

son, at least, whose good opinion is of some value, whom she may please or grieve; that she is not alone in a world where every one is thinking how they may get the better in a bargain; how they may get the most wages, and do the least work for it; how they can secure the genteelest fashions for themselves; where all live for themselves. To undertake such a class involves much more than an hour or two's teaching on Sunday; you must get personally acquainted with the members of your class; learn something of their history and their hopes; their present circumstances, advantages, and temptations; and they must feel they can fully confide in you, and come or write to you if they wish it. If they are ill you must visit them, and ascertain for them the respectability of any new situation they may be trying to get. The place of meeting should, if possible, be your own home: the time — as indeed in all these Sunday classes — such as will neither prevent their attending their place of worship, nor their having the finest part of the day for a walk. There would be no expense attending it.

They call themselves young ladies; and it will be much wiser for us, instead of laughing at the pretension, to do all we can by example and by precept to make them understand the meaning, and help them to attain something of the reality which the name intends. Most scrupulously should everything be avoided in manner, looks, and the management of the lesson, that could pos-

sibly lower them in their own eyes, or in their companions'. It is to be feared they will very often be found very ignorant of religion, and full of very foolish notions of life and happiness; but these are three subjects which should be very wisely and fully gone into with them; and as two of them are such as only gentlewomen can well give them any help about, I shall speak only of these.

First, in reference to their immediate business. We must strive to show them how God's word will guide them right through it; that uprightness, diligence, and prudence, are the true principles of a sure trade, and the only reliable means of success in it, in opposition to the petty deception and speculative competition too often resorted to; how faithfulness, love, and obedience to a heavenly Father, will overcome their peculiar difficulties, apply to the work of a mantua-maker's apprentice, as much as to an Apostle's; and can make the dreariest life full of peace, hope, and interest. Another point is dress. I do not mean they need be taught to give up their individual tastes in dress to their teachers, though when we know them well enough we may try to set it at its real value. But what occupies so large a portion of their thoughts, their time, and their earnings, — most of them being employed in one way or another about nothing but dress and fashions, — must not be left out of their religious instruction, lest they should be led to leave their

Sunday instructions out of their every-day life. And if that which is necessarily their work, be denounced as necessarily worldly, what conclusion can they come to but that they must be worldly; and that Sunday being the only day on which obedience to God's word is possible, it is the only time in which it is necessary? To many of them dress must appear the one absorbing interest of all the upper ranks, the one thing which makes a lady. And we must well consider how the duty which ennobles all work can be so set before them as to counteract the frivolity of the work itself. If we can succeed in doing this, there will be no need of sumptuary rules about their own dress being given them under the name of Christian principles. Still more needful and more difficult will it be to speak with them of love and marriage; of Whose appointment they are, and in what their duties and happiness consist. They have no mother or father at hand to watch over them; their notions on these points are drawn from foolish novels, and the still more foolish gossip and flirtations they can carry on, or see carried on around them: the men with whom they associate do not know how to treat them with real respect; but copying what they imagine to be the politeness of fine gentle men, without the self-respect from which politeness springs, lose the manly bluntness of the working-man, and get nothing better in its place; lay up a stock of graces and witticisms with so much pains, they fancy themselves irresistible,

and so become vulgar and ridiculous in their behaviour to the young women.

We shall do little for them in this matter, unless we can teach them to think of love and of marriage as too holy and pure a thing for idle jesting and for pretending. Once teach a young woman, *as St. Paul bids us*, what a wife ought to be and to do, and she will not surely be in such danger of allowing herself to be drawn into a mere idle connection, still less into a marriage, with a man she neither respects nor cares for. But it is strange how averse older women are to speak to girls of that love which, next to a parent's, is the strongest and holiest of all our human affections, except they speak of it as something silly or false; and so we leave them to learn what they can about it from the only other sources open to them, novels and such like, which are too often neither wise nor pure.

To supply the secular instruction necessary for those children who are taken so early from our day schools, night schools are indispensable. These generally meet once or twice in the week, sometimes in populous districts every night. They are for the most part free, but with some limitation as to the persons allowed to attend. If connected with a Sunday school, they should be open for the children above a certain age who can read, and for all who have left the Sunday school with the consent of their parents and teachers, so long as they conduct themselves respectably. If not

directly connected with a Sunday school, the admission should be made as open as possible, proper behaviour in the school, and in going and returning to and from it, being all that is required.

For girls and young women, we must, I fear, look on these classes only as a choice of the lesser of two evils; and never, for the sake of increasing the numbers, should we try to persuade any to attend them who can learn in any other way. No one should venture to open such a class, without obtaining some security that the girls who attend shall be able to return home without molestation, and shall be unable to loiter on their way without their parents' knowledge. For this purpose, no girl should be admitted to the class, without a visit being paid by her teacher to her parents, to ascertain that she comes with their knowledge and consent, and to tell them the exact hour at which the school opens and closes, that they may know how soon she should leave home, and at what time she should be back again. It is better, if possible, to arrange this personally with the fathers; if they see you are anxious for their co-operation, some of them will come to meet their girls, and most will go out to seek for them should they be at all late. It is also very important that any irregularity of attendance, whether lateness in coming, or absence, should be regularly reported to the parents, and its cause explained. Large classes in well-lighted towns are probably far safer than those in smaller towns and villages. Cer-

tainly in these a night school requires constant vigilance, and after all is a source of perpetual anxiety to those who are responsible for it. They are, however, our only chance of obtaining for many of our children any secular instruction, or of putting them in the way of teaching themselves. And certainly we shall not make these schools safer by staying away from them.

The object for which they are held, must, of course, vary with the age, employments, and ignorance of the scholars, partly also depending on what they wish to learn. Those connected with Sunday schools being in a great measure attended by children, are generally for the purpose of teaching writing and arithmetic, and if there is time, to practise them in reading. The older scholars should be assisted in the studies they have the most taste for, or carry on for themselves. The higher branches of arithmetic, mathematics, and algebra, have a peculiar charm for many youths; history, travels, and physical geography are favourites with nearly all. The elements of mechanics; a knowledge of machinery of different kinds; of agriculture or gardening, would be useful to most; and to give them some understanding of the theory of their own handicraft, the history of its past progress, and the further improvements needed in it; a knowledge of the first principles of trade, of wages, and labour—their own trade especially—what regulates its prices, what prospect there is of its continuance in its present form,

these sort of subjects are what the most intelligent talk of and think about, and by helping them to take a wider view, and to obtain more correct information upon them, we may not only aid in the cultivation of their minds, but also in making them more intelligent workmen, and in learning how inseparable their own and their employers' interests are. But this will not often fall into our portion of the work.

For our girls and young women chiefly need to learn such things as will help them to understand woman's work (as defined before)—having to do with persons, and household matters, and with all that is now spoken of under the rather vague term of "common things." But so much has been lately written on this kind of teaching I shall only mention two mistakes, as they seem to me; one, in the subjects taught, the other in the mode of teaching them.

The first is, that such teaching is extended over too many subjects, and so is, practically, quite superficial; the second is in the words used in our handbooks of teaching, and by teachers themselves.

Now there are some subjects which it is most important they should so learn as to be able to think on them, and act upon their knowledge of them, for themselves. Of these, next to the relation of man to God, and by His appointment and through Him to mankind, their own station and its duties stand foremost; including in this whatever may help them to understand and fulfil

those duties. It includes all therefore that belongs to the business of wives, of mothers, of nurses; to health, and the conditions necessary to it, as good air, food, warm clothing, cleanliness; the first principles of nursing the sick; how they may be helps meet for their husbands, and how they may govern and train their children, so far as this practical moral philosophy *can* be taught by precept and information; and that not being very far, there is all the more time to teach that little thoroughly. Examples and biographies are the best vehicles for much of this.

Then there are other subjects on which technical information may be very useful, though not of any service as a means of education. For example, all the information that can be given them about our colonies; the way of living and the prospects of manual labourers there; their climate and productions; the kind of clothing needed in them; the voyage to them and its expense, and the kind of labour wanted in them, &c. Domestic and personal economy, including information about solvent sick clubs, &c., the risks they run by rash investments of their small savings for the sake of higher interest, which they constantly make and so continually lose by, that this does more to discourage prudent thrift than anything else, except the trouble of it. On subjects of this sort, it may be very useful for them to have correct information; but like all merely technical information, it is so difficult to remember it correctly, that unless your

pupils are scholars enough to make notes of it, the greater part will be lost as soon as given.

Lastly, there are subjects on which it is very pleasant for us to give, and for them to receive information; but of which it is quite impossible they (I speak of the women only), should ever have time enough to study them as an instrument of education, still less to make any practical use of them. Geography, grammar, astronomy, and all the ologies, I put under this head, undauntedly; and for most, history also; excepting that history of our own country, its dangers and distresses, its triumphs and victories, the good it has done and the mistakes it has made, what is its progress, and what are its duties,—which is not yet written, and which, when it is, had better go to the men's school first. For the rest, there is no doubt a very little general information makes a great show; and some is almost necessary to enable them to understand the books of the lending library, which should always if possible be joined to these classes. But two or three hours in the week, which is the utmost you can have, is not sufficient for the more useful and necessary things they need to learn; whilst the whole of it would scarcely be enough to ground them in the simplest elements of those more showy subjects; and though elementary is not to be confused with superficial teaching, it certainly has a peculiar tendency to become such, when the scholars are nearly grown up, and the teachers know a little of everything.

After all this, I confess, those who undertake such a class must decide, first, the subjects which they themselves are able to teach the best, and then which of these will be the most useful for their scholars, and how far it will be wise to go into it. Men are very apt to err here; when not content with giving the results of a science, they will try to show how those results were obtained, a process generally quite beyond their scholars' attainments; and women, by mixing up the last ingenious, but as yet unproved theory, with the really ascertained facts. Working men will go much further, and take much more interest in any of these intellectual subjects than the women will; and considering how much the latter have to learn that is directly practical, I would willingly persuade you to take up these subjects first, and then see what more can be added to those. Even then it is a question whether human life, and poetry, would not be more beneficial than a knowledge of mountains and rivers.

The second error is in the words used in teaching. Deceived by the intelligence with which they guess at your meaning, and surprised perhaps at their knowing more of the things themselves than was expected, educated teachers forget, or never know, how limited their language is, and how vague and incorrect often is the meaning they attach to our most familiar words. It puts one on thorns to listen to a lecture to working people, of which every sixth word might as well have been

spoken in Latin. Men mistake in this way oftener than women do; our more colloquial teaching not demanding the dignity of sonorous words, yet we do perpetually fall into this mistake, though with less excuse. For we should most of us be fully alive to these stumbling-words, from the difficulty we ourselves have found first in learning, and then in remembering the exact meaning of our English scientific or philosophic writers, who use words of Latin and Greek derivation, the meaning of which being learned by rote, is continually escaping our memory, or eluding it by some new application of the term.* Now when the object is merely the literary improvement of our scholars, as in day schools, it is very useful to familiarise them with the roots and the applications of these naturalised foreigners; but when the knowledge to be given is of value for its own sake; when the object is to enable them to think of it for themselves, and the time so limited, we must learn to translate it as much as possible into their own vernacular; and if you can make a man a sensible contented citizen, a woman a thoughtful, intelligent house-wife, it will not hurt though they express good sense in the broadest dialect.

For the same reason we must content ourselves, I fear, with teaching truth and accuracy in some

* The exquisitely ludicrous passages of "dim no-meaning," we meet with now and then in imitators of German phrases, doubtless owe their origin to the same want of scholarship.

more direct and less refined way than by drawing lessons: it is difficult to teach drawing at night, the materials are expensive, and when hands and eyes have been hard worked all day they should rest in the gaslight. Singing is in all these respects a much more feasible attainment. A singing lesson requires nothing but a black-board and a few copies of Hullah, of chant, or song-books, now so numerous and cheap, and well suited for part singing; half an hour in the evening is ample for this; an hour would be very short for a drawing lesson. In our schools singing is a wonderful aid to order and good discipline; in sewing and adult classes it is a great check to the idle gossip that would otherwise fill up the intervals: it is an unmixed pleasure to old and young; and of minor inducements to attend our public worship there are none more persuasive than this. If the love of music leads some to bad company and idleness, we must not forget that the love is there; we neither created, nor can we stifle it; if the love of drawing would keep them at home, in how many homes is it practicable? how many have a taste, an eye, a hand for it? Of the number of our own rank who are taught drawing, how many make anything of it? But in many parts of the country music is a passion; to use one's own voice costs nothing, not even time; and I know nothing that can afford so suitable an amusement as cheap, or still better, amateur musical concerts, or

meetings for singing in parts and choruses amongst themselves; nothing that can better afford the bodily and mental refreshment, or that excitement which monotonous labour makes necessary. The truth is, they will get this in some way or other: hence the musical suppers in public-houses, in the dancing-saloons, &c. And the only practical question for us is, shall we wash our hands of it, because it is dangerous; or shall we face the danger and afford them at least the opportunity of obtaining it in safe company, and under more modest circumstances, what they will have in any case. If we can keep the singing-classes of a manageable size, make admission into them so far a privilege as shall ensure safe company and propriety of behaviour; and if by our own attendance we can accustom our young men and women to be in company together without vulgarity and rudeness, there can be no reason why one of their greatest pleasures should not become one of the safest, and do something also towards a not unimportant part of education. Once a week would be quite sufficient for their practising; once a fortnight might be enough, as the members would have to practise their lesson at home alone, or with three or four together. Generally singing forms only a part of the business of the night-school; those who excel in it may be encouraged to join the choir, or to form a choral society of their own, meeting in the same place, and with the aid of the same friends who have taught them the ru-

diments. There are few places in which no school-room can be found unused at night that might be lent for such a purpose as this, escaping not only the expense, but the temptations of the public-houses.

Drawing lessons can scarcely be of use to any but a limited class. For those of the middle classes who have time to learn and practise it, it is as useful a part of education as it is to us, and the same kind of drawing that we learn ourselves may be taught. But for those who will have to toil for their daily bread it will be of little service, unless it is an aid to them in their different trades. Most workers in wood and stone will be better workers for knowing how to copy and design on paper. The designing of patterns, even copying them, is a distinct trade in connection with most of our manufactures, and those who can copy well and quickly may earn a very good livelihood in many of them, for their numbers are few, and like all skilled labour, it is sure to bear a higher price. The difficulty is how to find out who has so much of the drawing faculty, eye, hand, or mind, whichever it be, as to make it worth their while to learn drawing, with a view to their future trade. In our common day-schools there is no time for teaching drawing; out of a first class of forty, whose average age is ten years and a half, there are perhaps one or two, who, if properly taught, might get their living in such a trade; for the rest it is wasted. When

the first class can be kept till fourteen or fifteen, it is very useful to teach them so much of drawing as to enable them really to find out if they take to it, or care to carry it on for themselves. In most industrial schools, orphan, or reformatory asylums, where the child's whole time is available for school purposes, this might be practicable, and would be very useful as opening a new trade to a few, and improving more in the different mechanical trades they are learning. In a night-school, the only way to attain this object would be to open a distinct class for such as liked to learn.

The last, and for us almost the most important object of a night-school, and the way in which it has been successfully managed, will be best described in the report of the Leeds Factory Girls' Sewing School, given in the educational blue-book of 1856–57. I would only observe that you would in smaller classes, and in most parts of the country, find it necessary to supply the girls with work, *without* requiring them to buy it: either fine work of your own, or coarser that can be sold at cost price to poor families: men's shirts, and children's clothes find the readiest sale, but there is always a loss upon this. The workers should never be paid.

"We meet at 7 o'clock, on two evenings of the week, all the year round, in a comfortable well-lighted room, provided with forms and tables. When a scholar applies for admission, her name, age, residence, and occupation are registered, and

she receives a card with her name and a number written on it. She may either bring work of her own, or order any useful article of clothing, which is cut out and prepared for her against the next day of meeting. To this is attached a ticket with her name and its price, and when delivered out, the particulars are entered in an alphabetical book, in which the scholar is from time to time credited with such payments as she makes. When the article is fully paid for she is allowed to take it away, and she has a pass-ticket given her, which she delivers to the door-keeper at the end of the evening. The unfinished work is collected in bags, each article being tied up with the scholar's card outside, that she may find her own work without difficulty on the next school-night. Each table is presided over by one or two ladies as teachers. Another takes the general superintendence, and we have also the great advantage of the assistance of two gentlemen, one of whom sits at a separate table to take and enter the sums paid by the girls, the other assists in keeping order. From time to time the girls sing hymns to simple tunes, which they much enjoy and excel in; and generally a half hour is employed in reading to them some simple story. At nine o'clock 'time' is called, the work collected, and the school closed with a brief address and a hymn."

"Under this system our institution has now been carried on for four years. In the course of the last year they made 1550 articles, for which

they paid, in instalments of 1*d.* or more, as they thought proper, 73*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.* The nightly attendance ranged between ninety and a hundred and thirty. No charge is made for teaching, nor for needles, tape, thread, &c. The articles are supplied at cost price, and we are most careful they should be of good quality, and cut out as economically as possible. To this care, and the exactness with which the payments of the girls are entered, we attribute the entire confidence they have in our dealings with them. I will only add a few words on the moral effects of our institution in promoting a healthy intercourse between the different classes of society, whose wide separation I look on as one of the greatest evils of our time. Our scholars are almost entirely mill girls, who have few opportunities of being brought into contact with ladies who know how to manifest a kindly interest in their welfare, without trenching upon that independence of feeling which is so marked a feature in our operatives. But their appreciation of a few hours' such intercourse is soon evidenced by the improvement of their appearance and manners, and the thankfulness with which they receive the instruction of their teachers; who, on their part, are amply repaid for their time and trouble by results far more satisfactory than they ever anticipated."

For the same object nearly, mothers' classes have been established in London and other large towns; chiefly, but not solely, in connection with ragged schools. The children have been told to

invite their mothers to meet once a fortnight, or oftener, to learn to mend and make clothes for themselves and their children, and for such instruction in household and family matters as can be given in conversation. A short time of the evening is also spent in giving the simplest religious instruction. These classes have, on the whole, been very well attended by those for whom they were designed. The "Bible women" generally have a class of this kind under their care, but none of them seem to have equalled in real success those taught by ladies. In "Ragged Homes and how to mend Them" every hint needed will be found; and if painted rather in the rosy light, in which ladies are now apt to view their own works, the results would unquestionably be astonishing, though viewed through the most prosaic medium.

When the use of a schoolroom can be obtained, the expense of an evening class will be little more than the cost of light and firing. It is better far for the scholars to buy their own pens, copybooks, and slates; the very low price at which they can be obtained from the National Society, or from Government schools, puts them within the reach of all but absolutely "ragged" scholars. Grants of Bibles and Testaments, when the poverty of the school justifies it, can be obtained from the British and Foreign Bible Society; and of lending libraries from the Christian Knowledge or Religious Tract Societies. The indispensable black-

board and its stand, maps, &c. will be found in every schoolroom; and desks, with a little management of the lights, can supply the place of tables to the sewing scholars. If you are unable to obtain the help of a coadjutor in the conducting such a class, it will be better to begin with a few of those of whom you already know something; and until perfect order is established among them, and you have measured your own powers of voice and command, the number should be limited to fifteen or twenty at the very most.

Lastly, in respect of all teaching of this kind, remember this: "What moved these pupils to gratitude, perhaps more than anything else, was the sacredness with which he regarded all their engagements. Although teaching them gratuitously, he was as punctual, and manifested as much disappointment if prevented from meeting them, as one could do whose obligations or interests were at stake."

# CHAP. XII.

## WHAT WE CAN DO BY PERSONAL INTERCOURSE.

FOUNDATION LAID FOR THIS IN OUR SCHOOLS: — 1. IN THEIR AMUSEMENTS: PROVIDING BOOKS — DANGERS OF "RELIGIOUS" TRASH — SOUND LITERATURE — HOLIDAY AMUSEMENTS. 2. IN THEIR WORK: TEACHING HOUSEHOLD WORK — TRAINING GIRLS FOR SERVICE — TEACHING OUR OWN SERVANTS. 3. IN HELPING THEM TO HIGHER WORK; AS IN THE CASE OF SERVANTS, FITTING THEM TO RISE TO HIGHER STATIONS — IN SUNDAY SCHOOLS EMPLOYING THEM AS TEACHERS. — USING HOSPITALS AS SCHOOLS FOR NURSES. — ENGAGING THEIR ASSISTANCE IN WORKS OF LOVE.

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"Our province is virtue and religion, life and manners; the science of improving the temper and making the heart better. He who should find out one rule to assist us in this work would deserve infinitely better of mankind than all the improvers of other knowledge put together."—*Dr. Butler.*

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THE acquaintance we make with our scholars in their schools and classes must form the foundation of our work for them; it must not end as the school door closes on them. To make our teaching efficient, indeed, we must continually follow our scholars home in search of truants, of the sick, the poor, or the faulty. And if we have done this, and so established ourselves as the family friend, we need not cease to watch over and counsel them when they cease to be our pupils. We may try to keep them as long as we

possibly can under direct instruction, but this not only, not even chiefly for the sake of the actual instruction that can be given them; but rather to keep up, as much as possible, personal friendly intercourse with them during those perilous years which see them launched into life. It should be regarded as a matter of course by them, and it very much rests with us to make it such, that our old scholars are to call on us each time they come home from service; that they send for us in illness, come to us in any difficulty, when in want of work, when changing their situation or home, and when about to marry. And if on looking over our old lists we find some of whom we are losing sight, a call should be made on them at once. Too often, when they get tired of "schooling," they will avoid their teacher, pass you in the street without knowing you, as though they had offended you by leaving, and therefore all intercourse must cease. This shows us the harm that may be done by too great a desire to retain them as scholars. The real way of keeping them under instruction, is first to have something more to teach them, and then to make learning pleasant to them; but if this will not prevail, let them leave your class, feeling that you are as much their friend as ever, and that you will be always glad to see them and to help them when you can; invite them still to your yearly treat, or to share in any amusement you may be able to provide for your scholars.

1. This matter of amusements and treats is a very

important point in our intercourse with them, and I know none that requires more discretion. We can hardly guard them from the bad and corrupting amusements they are tempted to indulge in, except by putting within their reach *real* amusements and recreations that are harmless in themselves and safe in their circumstances. On the other hand, we must take care not to draw them away from their own homes, not to teach them to think evenings spent in their own cottages dull and tedious. Fortunately the almost universal habit of our people is to have two or three great holiday seasons in the year, when they give up a week to pleasure and then set to work again; but the increase of education and mental stimulus is having a very marked effect on their demand for constant excitement of this kind, and it is a danger that should be carefully watched against.

The most practicable way of providing them with amusements is by lending them books or serials; but they must be books that *honestly* amuse and interest yourself, and are not too far removed from their experience to amuse them. If they have been successfully taught to read well, with tolerable fluency and accuracy, and in an intelligent manner, put them on reading the book you lend aloud at home. The books they may have heard you read to them in their Sunday, or other schools, will be the best for them to begin with; having themselves heard it well read, with the needful explanations, &c., and having talked it over with

you, will make the office of reader pleasant because easy, and in this way a higher class of books may be made very interesting to them. Do not, however, aim too high; after working all day relaxation is the necessity, mental improvement the luxury: but even then it is better to avoid what is silly; you may think this a truism, but an acquaintance with the class of books generally provided for this purpose will convince you it is worthy of attention. Much has been written about the terribly bad books written for and bought by our working people in such amazing quantities, and doubtless with too much truth. But the books provided as a remedy for this poison are too often unquestionably objectionable. Good people seem to think nothing that contains a good moral can be too ill written, too stupid, too sentimental, not to say too false, to be suitable for the uneducated, and for those who have the least time for reading. Many who would be alarmed at the idea of reading Shakspeare to them, or of lending the "Vicar of Wakefield," or "The Heart of Mid Lothian," or even "Mary Barton;" think it good to distribute right and left novelets of the poorest writing, and most untruthful, because they are full of religious phrases; our scholars and our lending libraries are absolutely deluged with tales in which pious children rebuke and reform their parents, or, as a dear little girl said in explaining what "*honour* thy father and mother" means, "it means we must try to make them good:" in which evil-doers

fall under all kinds of vindictive punishments, far exceeding anything in Draco's code, and religious girls are rewarded with rich husbands and live happy ever after: with stories of sweet young ladies, just seventeen, and just come home from school, who write long letters to their fathers to point out to them the errors of their creed and their life; and when he is (very properly) displeased, joyfully set down in their journals how they are persecuted for righteousness' sake. These pretty colours in which our religious sugar-plums are wrapped up are rank poisons. But people now seem to have given up all idea of judging for themselves; we all cry in packs, "A sweet book," "A work that has been greatly blessed," "26,000 copies," and it never occurs to us to ask, "Is the sweet book true?" An infidel book, an immoral book is at least an open enemy; but this well meaning tract, that makes religion silly, piety sentimental, and conversion of the heart to God an unmanly, egotistical conceitedness, eats away the very heart of our faith. It is easy to get readers for such books; but they only enervate the minds and confuse the notions of those who like them; and they who know anything of the hard sneering spirit that too much pervades our manufacturing population, will be able to judge what effect such unmanly and false statements of truth must have upon those who do not love the truth, how gladly they seize on such specimens of "your religion" as a reason for setting aside the whole matter.

But it is hard to find substitutes: the worst of any puerile kind of reading is, that those who indulge in it will not bear anything better. Yet our English literature is not so poor in sterling works as not to afford us materials, if we knew where to turn for them. It is rich in standard biographies of Christian men and women who lived and worked for Christ and did not keep self-conscious journals, or publish histories of their wonderful successes: in such works as Walton's Lives, Fox's Martyrs, Colonel Gardiner, Colonel Hutchinson, Swartz, Brainerd. It is rich in poetry which our reading population can delight in almost as much as ourselves—Cowper's, Scott's, Gray's, Milton's, some of Tennyson's, and Shakspeare; in books of natural history; of travels, as Prior's Voyages, Bruce's, Park's, the Arctic voyagers, and in books of fiction that are neither unreal nor immoral.

These for every day: for holiday times it is well to provide some safe and pleasant way of social enjoyment: a tea party in connection with our different classes, gathering those who have been members as well as those who still are such, with games afterwards, or a magic lantern and singing: an excursion together in the summer to some pleasant spot (anywhere in the country is beautiful to those who live in the heart of a town), fixed for the holiday week, keeps them from the temptations of such times, and does more to confirm the friendly feeling between them and us than

months of labour for their more substantial good. Those who possess pretty grounds or gardens would confer a great boon on their labouring neighbours by opening them at fixed times, as on Saturday, or still better, on Sunday afternoons; a very little trouble would secure their being open only to those who would make a right use of the boon; and when the grounds are small, the admission would necessarily be limited: your own class might be allowed to bring any of their own family or it might be open to the Sunday school or the district. That no mischief will be done by the working men and their families has been proved over and over again. All through the late Duke of Devonshire's time the experiment was tried on the largest possible scale; and by the testimony of the servants themselves, the severest judges in such a matter of the poor that can be found, it was not the "lower classes" who did any harm; though they complained bitterly of the mischief caused by visitors of a higher grade. If you have only a flower garden, when it is in its summer beauty let your poorer friends see it; they will enjoy it more than any others. Lectures, illustrated with pictures or transparencies, are also very popular, perhaps hardly to be set down in the list of amusements. We are apt to spoil these, for the younger objects of our care, by trying to cram in with them a little mental improvement; as if fresh air, or harmless laughter, or pleasure from anything that is innocuous, were

not improving enough, when so rare, as to repay our trouble in procuring them.

2. We must strive in every possible way to make them better workers, more painstaking, more intelligent, and more skilful. In all schools this should be kept in mind, that the ultimate object is not to teach them many things, but to secure their really doing well what they have learnt. When they have entered on daily work, it is, for the most part, only by moral influence we can help them in this particular, setting it before them not only as a worthy ambition, but as their bounden duty, as Christians, to do their work in the best manner. It might be a very proper opening of our Sunday class, for instance, with factory girls, to inquire what fines they had in the week for lateness, carelessness, or bad work. A little interest in their progress, a little judicious praise when they are advanced, a few encouraging words when they find their labour wearisome or difficult, will often send them to their work again with a cheerfulness that conquers it at once. Praise is a gold coin when used sparingly and wisely, but whilst we limit ourselves to strict truth in using it, we may be always looking out, like Basil Hall's captain, for any fair cause for it, especially with the slow and awkward.

In many kinds of work we might ourselves teach them, or rather help them to improve themselves; in all kinds of needlework and the making of clothes, from the choice of the most suitable

needles and thread to the best and most economical way of cutting out, and to the improvement of the fit of an evening dress: in every matter that requires taste and correctness of eye, or quickness of observation, as the arrangement of colours in devising or reforming artistic patterns for lace-makers or embroiderers, obtaining natural flowers for artificial flower-makers, lending drawings or giving aid to the painters of china; in these and similar ways you may qualify yourself to correct the taste and improve the work of the women with whom you may become connected. Skilled labour almost always obtains a sure livelihood, even in needlework; very few indeed who are thoroughly good workwomen need ever be out of work. In a large town in which there is no manufacture to employ the young women, and where the rock on which our school girls as they grew up were continually being wrecked, was, that they could find no employment, I made several attempts to get work for some peculiarly destitute women; in each the answer was, "If she can do ladies' work well enough, we have plenty of that:" and they might have earned with ease ten shillings a week by it. But they all failed; even when the work was cut out and fixed for them, they could not do it tolerably.

How to make our working women better housewives, better cooks, nurses, and managers in their own homes, is one of the great problems of the day. Industrial schools may do much more than

they have yet done towards this; but whilst the poor continue as poor as they now are these will never do much. Cooking schools, such as that established on a small scale in London, and elsewhere, are excellent, but must of necessity, be utterly unavailable for ten girls out of 10,000. But wherever there is a lady at leisure, having a servant and house of her own, there might be an industrial school for a few girls, one, or two, or three at a time, who being in the day-school and in the first class, and having learnt to sew tidily, might be drafted off for half the day, or for every other day, or week, to learn the simpler parts of cooking, housework, and washing. This plan has been tried with very fair success amongst the boys in agricultural districts, where the gentlemen and farmers interested in the school, employ a certain number of the schoolboys on their farms in pairs, two boys taking the work of one, alternately. Girls might in this way be trained for service, but the highest object to be obtained by it would be the fitting them to take charge of a home of their own. Where several families could be found to engage in this work, or if there were a lady's house at hand, no further industrial school would be needed; till this is the case, we must be content to benefit a few only of the many who need; and our success will always depend upon our servants at least as much as upon ourselves. What makes young girls so awkward on first going into service is their having too much to learn at once. If you

undertake to teach a school girl in this manner, you should take care that she is taught only one thing at a time; for instance let her learn to clean a grate, to take out the ashes without sending them all over the room, or her own face, to blacken and polish it, and to lay the fire, first of all; and till she can be trusted to do this quite well by herself, do not allow her to learn anything else; the rest of her time may be filled up with waiting on, fetching and carrying for the other servants in things that need no teaching. When her grates are bright and the fires properly laid, have her taught something else, as washing up dishes, cleaning pans, &c.: and when she can show you the kitchen fire-place and all the cooking vessels in proper order, and the crockery clean and dry in its place, it will be time enough to reward her by teaching her how to use them in cooking; but this also in the same way, piece by piece; not in a jumble of boiling, and baking, and stewing, and roasting all at once, as your cook will be almost sure to teach it, if you leave it altogether to her. When this has been tried, no payment has been made for the work they do, the teaching is given as a part of their school work. If the girls come for the whole day they have their dinner; if for half, their breakfast, but the former is better suited to the lessons of the school. It has almost always been found that these half scholars keep up with their schoolmates who are at school for the whole time.

It is especially with our own servants that this attempt to make them more skilful in their work, forms a most important part of our duty towards them; they have a direct claim on us for such teaching, and with them we can do it most thoroughly; and perhaps of all classes they need it most. I need not say it is the duty of every mistress to instruct her young servants in Christian truth and practice: we ought further, indeed as a part of this, to do all we can to make each a thoroughly efficient servant, to teach her — or to see that she is taught—to do her work thoroughly, quietly, and quickly; patiently bearing with her slowness and carelessness, and helping her to like her work, and to be diligent and cheerful in doing it, both by example and by making it a pleasant thing for her to do all she has to do well. The first step is to teach her the difference between its being ill done and well done, then to point out to her by degrees the principles on which its being well done depends: and to accustom her to carefulness and thrifty ways, not by scolding only when things are wasted, but by making it a pleasure to her to be saving. Is it not peculiar, that with so many families where grown up daughters have no work to do, it is yet so hard to find a first place for a young girl, because it is so troublesome to teach her and takes so much time? My young friends, there is a work for women, of which we have not yet spoken—just now a very fashionable one, and always most interesting—in which you may by

and by be called to engage—to which perhaps you look forward with enthusiasm as a work which is worth living for: and so it is; yet believe me, it is so not for its successes; it is the most painful, disappointing, harrowing work any one can undertake. If now you will undertake to teach a young innocent girl to gain her own livelihood in honest service, and can help her to become a really good and faithful servant, you will have done more, far more, than you can hope to do in a refuge. Besides *this* work is the best preparation you can have for that; the dullest, most intractable servant girl you can find to teach, will give you a faint idea of what it is to control and subdue the wildness of temper, the headstrong self-willedness, the almost inaccessible dullness, that must be encountered among the fallen.

Indeed, the comforts of husbands, and the health and good of children are not to be sacrificed to this, any more than to other ways of doing good beyond our home circle; and therefore I speak principally to the unmarried, in their parents', or in their own homes. A wife has no right to undertake the great addition to her household cares involved in teaching a young girl to be a servant, if she have already as much to do as her health and time will well allow. Yet one lady I know, who with delicate health and many children, had always a young girl training in her kitchen, and another in her nursery: she gave them low wages at first, increasing with their progress, and when

they had learnt enough got situations for them elsewhere, and began again with others: it was one of those households where the work always seems done, never doing. And one word more: when you have thus taught her her work, and succeeded in making her that uncommon thing, a thorough servant, do not think your labour lost, if instead of being a servant she marries. Rather give her every facility for making a wise choice and settling in a home of her own.* Once convinced you are their friend, it will not be difficult for you to gain so much of their confidence, as would prevent anything clandestine, by making it unnecessary. No doubt this involves you in much responsibility, yet really in less than we incur when we prevent a servant's marrying for our own convenience merely; and it may seem a good deal of trouble, when as the crown of your labour in training a servant, she settles in a home of her own, to become a good wife and mother as we hope, and you have to turn to the work, and begin it all over again, with all the temporary inconvenience an ignorant girl occasions in a house. But those really good servants are the most likely to have comfortable homes, and to make good husbands, and to bring up their children healthily and virtuously. Certainly we can have no other

* It is difficult to imagine any excuse for any woman, strong or weak, who takes advantage of her power as mistress to make another sacrifice, for her convenience, any reasonable prospect of her own, or her lover's happiness, by forbidding her marriage.

opportunity of improving the character of the wives and mothers of our working classes, equal to that which we have with our own servants; and though you may continually fail, and your labour may seem all thrown away, yet remember, if we wish to effect any lasting good, we must be at a good deal of pains: and if we really covet the honour and blessedness of being workers for God, we must not scant our labour because we see no harvest.

3. Then we must do what we can to provide higher work for those who show themselves at all willing to undertake it, and to help those who will be helped to fit themselves for it. Looking on work as the great educator, by higher work I mean not better paid work, but such as draws out and exercises higher powers and principles. Thus, a mother's work is a higher work than a teacher's: though the actual good obtained by each will no doubt depend on the spirit in which she has fulfilled it.

Servants are often striving to fit themselves for higher work, though too often they mistake their way to it, and here we ought to come to their aid. Let us take an instance, and not one out of the way or uncommon. A young girl goes from her school and rough home life into a gentleman's family; and she and her mother are proud of the "respectable" set of clothes they have been toiling and pinching to get, and think she is at the height of good fortune. Perhaps she is scullery maid, and finds that instead of being eldest at home,

she is the lowest in the house; then the clothes she thought so much of at home, seem very mean here, and this lowers her again in her own eyes; however she hopes to rise; but day after day and week after week passes in blackening grates, mopping floors, scrubbing pans, and breaking dishes,—hard, dirty, uncomfortable work; nor is it in human nature for the busy servants over her to abstain from scolding the slowness and awkwardness that necessarily belong to her ignorance and untaught hands; she finds she is still at the very bottom of Fortune's ladder. But with this, she sees a life totally different from her own. Young girls of her own age faring softly, living pleasantly, having only beautiful things to wear, pretty things to do. Now and then, when the family is out and the housemaid in a good humour, she sees their beautiful work, their lovely flowers, their many books,—or as a great treat she stands behind the door to see Miss come down dressed for a party, or with the open eyes of astonishment and awe, gets a glance at the party itself, or at the supper just laid out: and she goes back to her dirty coarse apron, her cinders and her endless pans, with a vague longing to be like those who are so clever, so beautiful, so happy: the more uncouth and awkward she is the more she longs to be like, or at least near them, to live amongst such sights and sounds, and to be free from her rough work and rougher self. The nearest approach she can think of is a lady's maid;

so when she gets three or four pounds of her wages, she goes home, engages herself to some village dressmaker for six months or a year — and finds herself as far from her hopes as ever, only ridiculed for her conceit in indulging them. We call it idleness: — and so she sinks into a discontented unwilling servant, satisfying no one, and always therefore changing her place; or she spoils gown pieces at home for an uncertain maintenance. Now even scullery maids might have some pleasant and ornamental work to do, if it were only a little garden strip round the back court to tend, or dressing the servants' hall and the room with a few flowers for Sunday. And it is not a fit or Christian thing that girls, living under the same roof and members of the same household, should be as far removed from each other as Brahmins and Pariahs.

All ought to have a fair hope of rising; and with all such pains ought to be taken, so that they may learn to rise, if they will. A regular system of promotion, with the teaching spoken of above, would secure this. If the under-servants know they shall rise to the place above them on the next vacancy, if they have learnt their own work well first, and proved themselves trustworthy; or that their mistress will obtain a suitable place for them elsewhere, should no such vacancy occur in her own family, they have a direct motive for trying to improve; and though there would be the inconvenience possibly of having servants not quite up to their work for the

first few months, on the whole we should be better served than now with our constant changes, coming and going of strangers, and continual dissatisfaction in our domestic department.

By employing them now and then in our own works in any little matter of taste;—such as showing them how to arrange the furniture and ornaments of a room, to give that air of repose and intelligence so perceptible where it is, so inexplicable where it is not; — how to hang curtains and drapery gracefully, a thing rarely ever done by the best housemaid;—to group ornaments and arrange flowers together,—all these things have a meaning, and a reason, just as intelligible to your housemaid as to yourself very likely, only she has never had a chance of learning it, the knowledge of which would give her daily work an interest and intelligence superior to that which it now has. By letting them help you to nurse in sickness, and in higher works still, giving them opportunities of doing acts of kindness to the poor around you, — using them as your messengers to carry what they have made for the sick and the poor; — putting them in the way of helping their families at home; — getting the older servants to be willing teachers of the younger ones, or of the school-girls you undertake to teach household work; — by these and similar means you may engage them in higher work than that for which you hired them, which yet will only lead them to do *that* work better, and will be a certain good to

themselves, as well as a benefit to those they help. I shall be told it is easy to speak of all this, but that it is quite impracticable. That it may be difficult, and certainly must be very troublesome, is true: most attempts to effect real good are so. But it is not impossible for a gentlewoman to gain such influence over her less educated servants as shall make them willing to co-operate with her, —that is the real secret — to make them feel they are working with you. You cannot do it without their help, but you can make it not their interest only, but their pleasure to give this. You must not be unwilling to be obliged to them for the pains they may take in teaching a young servant; consult them about her and her progress, and let it be distinctly understood that you regard their success in teaching as a greater triumph, a more valuable proof of their skill, than the best performance of their own work by themselves. (There is nothing fictitious in this — it *is* unquestionably a greater proof of skill.) To young housekeepers I will only add this caution — if you have two or more upper servants, and undertake to teach a young girl, she should be put under one only, or at any rate should have distinct times for helping each arranged by yourself.

In some Sunday schools the plan of employing the elder boys and girls who have stayed in the school after their confirmation, and who are tolerably intelligent, and steady, as teachers of the younger classes, has been followed with very fair

success; at first they would be sent occasionally to supply the absence of the regular teacher, and then in a little time as regular teachers themselves; if two can be appointed to one class, so as to divide the hours of teaching, it makes it less "confining" as they say. This gives them higher work, and exactly of that kind which enables them to put in practice the lessons they have just been receiving, whilst it keeps up and increases the knowledge they have gained; it unites the more thoughtful together, and gives them a sort of character to maintain, and that is an amazing preservative to us all from wrong. Their own direct instruction need not cease, though this work itself is perhaps the best instruction they can now have. Our young women especially will learn in it to practise the school way of managing the little ones, which is almost certain to be less violent and more firm than that they are used to at home; they learn how to teach those simple religious truths that a child is concerned to know, and should they ever have children of their own, they can scarcely fail to teach them the better for it. Certainly where I have seen this system tried, the homes of our former teachers have been above the average; their children more regularly at school, and more obedient: the teachers have not married so early, and, generally, have married steadier men, and in rather better circumstances than the average. Nor have the schools suffered; on the whole these make more intelligent, more manageable, more

interested teachers than the grade above them; they hold strictly to the traditional rules of the school: they know by their own experience, whether a change of rule is likely to be useful or not; and they count the office an honour, instead of fancying they confer a favour on the clergyman by undertaking it.

The system of pupil teachers is admirable in this respect, that it opens a way to the highest work to our working class. Nor can I join in regretting that so often when their training is completed the young men go off to other employments, the women marry and cease to teach: they are none the less raised, none the less fitted to raise their families. If farmers and tradesmen could always get wives as well educated as these, it would be worth more to themselves and to their servants than anything we can do for them.

Nursing in hospitals and elsewhere ought to be higher work for our poor women, and the attempt made to train the women in our workhouses for this work, will, so far as it succeeds, benefit them most of all in this way. It would remove a great hindrance to the practical working of the scheme, if the nurse's work could be separated more in our country hospitals from the housemaid's work, as it generally is in London hospitals: for many who are very fit for the one, have not strength for the other; the one requires strength and youth, the other the thought and experience of middle age; and though the younger

women employed to scour the floor and clean the wards might grow up into very good nurses whilst learning quiet and handy ways of doing their work, to require both offices to be undertaken by one woman limits the choice of nurses far too much. The offices of matron in workhouses, hospitals, for female emigrants, and in our prisons, require a different and a much better educated class of women: but it is to be hoped that whilst the presence and influence of unpaid visitors may make such situations more fit for real gentlewomen to undertake, no unpaid visitor will ever attempt to take the office herself; for to fill up *one* situation that might afford ennobling work and the maintenance which we do not need, would be a cruel wrong to the many who are seeking both, and so few of whom can obtain what they seek.

The offices of district visitors, of collectors for Bible and missionary societies, for clothing clubs &c. are all useful in their measure, as exercising kindness and thought for others; and I think we shall do more good by getting others, of the middle or working class to undertake them, than by fulfilling them ourselves. Another kind of instrumentality, that of female missionaries,— Bible women as they are called, — has lately been much talked of, and has been employed with very fair success: this must however be necessarily a limited occupation, desirable only in very large and very poor districts; the women must be paid also; but it may, if discreetly carried on, afford a valuable bond of union

between women of different ranks, making us all workers together in the same cause.

For one great object we should keep in mind in all our intercourse with the poor, is to get them to take an interest in working for others and in Christian work: in subscribing for missions, &c. if they can do no more, but by personal work when it is possible. I know they often do more than we do; there are many widows' mites offered up daily by men and women whom we should perhaps pity for their degraded condition — which put to shame all our offerings. But there is also a great want of them: there are many who have no mind to help any but themselves; many who are content with saying, "It's a shame as the rich don't," and they "can't think what such folks' hearts are made on;" and still more to whom it never seems to occur that they might help a sick neighbour, or nurse a child now and then, whose very boast is they keep to themselves and never meddle. Unquestionably our poor women would be very much happier, if the habit of active kindness could displace in them the petty spites, and tale-bearing and jealousy of gifts, and quarrelling, that goes on amongst themselves. But this is a thing we can only effectually teach by our own persevering practice.

impossible, and when we go to the poor man's house we must often go as strangers. And therefore the question arises, why have I come here? You cannot go merely because you are rich and they are poor. In a small village every one knows something of each other, and neighbourhood is a sufficient reason for friendly visits; but not in towns. Sometimes it is because we have undertaken to visit in the district where the family lives, for the purpose of religious instruction and conversation; sometimes on the business of the schools; or to enable them to supply themselves with Bibles, or Prayer-books, or to lay by in a weekly savings club; sometimes because we have heard of their being in trouble, sickness, or want. It is better to say at once why you have come, and to ascertain at once whether your visits will be welcome; for there is often a feeling that "ladies come just to look about them and meddle," as a man once told me, "and don't care a bit to help us, though we were starving. I wish they'd just keep away." If you have gone because you heard of their trouble, it is always well to say who told you of it. But in fact it is not the first visits that are the difficult ones: there is enough to learn that they like to tell of their own condition, and enough to tell them of, — of the public services, the schools, libraries, clubs, that are open to them if they choose to make use of them. It is the continued visits, repeated once a fortnight or once a month, that are apt to become so formal and

useless. It is then that the young visitor sits down, thinking what she shall say, and whether the good woman is wondering what she came for. It is then that persons are tempted to utter little religious sentiments, merely because they must say something, and wish to say something useful. And this is no light evil: we cannot warm another's heart by words however true, to which our own are cold at the time; but nothing is so easy as to communicate our coldness to those we speak with. Nothing is so bad for those to whom we speak as continually to hear the same solemn truths repeated over and over again, as a kind of necessary addition to every conversation, whilst they themselves have no sort of feeling about them.

Anyone who undertakes regular visiting amongst the poor, should make it a solemn rule to herself, never to utter one word *of her own* on a religious subject, the truth of which she has not realised herself: there is perhaps no work which requires more present faith in the promised aid of the Holy Spirit to teach us what we ought to say, and to make us say what is needed, though we may not yet understand it, than this of visiting for the purpose of religious conversation. What we repeat by rote, is almost sure to be either false, or falsely stated; what we have ourselves found to be real, however imperfectly and partially we know it, is so far as it goes true. And if, as continually happens, they need something more than we have yet learned for ourselves, the plain words of Scripture, especially of the Psalms, will be understood by

them in that fuller sense which experience in sorrow gives, though we who repeat them cannot enter into it. It is, however, a very difficult matter. Yet I cannot agree with those who say, all that is needed for our visit is to show a kindly interest in the family, and its affairs. This may indeed be—not all that is needed—but all that is in many cases practicable. A patient listener is sometimes the only comforter grief will accept; and calling out the memories of a happier and purer childhood, may be the only way in which the seared and weary heart can be refreshed and softened. But we may not be content to end here. We ought to go as the servants of Christ, to supply as far as we can what they most need; and certainly *that* is not merely to know that we feel kindly for them, but to be reminded if they have forgotten, to be persuaded if they never knew, that there is One, in Heaven yet ever present with them, who is not only a friend who loves them, but their owner who has redeemed, and their king who must be obeyed by them. Those who know this will be more refreshed by hearing and speaking of Him for a while in the midst of the toil and tumult of their daily life, than by any sense of our kindness; and they who do not learn to heed His love, are not much profited by the example of ours. To prevent our falling into cold formulas, or into mere gossip, it is a good rule even in district visiting not to pay any visit without some specific object; and generally the visit should be

considered as ended when that object is attained. If it is true, as the poor are apt to say, "the gentlefolk come to see us because they have nothing else to do;" it would be better at least to keep the example of idleness out of their sight; and certainly they need no encouragement to gossiping. And though it is not necessary to have a very important reason for so unimportant an act as calling on a poor neighbour; unless we clearly recognise to ourselves why we are going, what we wish to do there, and how it may be best done, it will be found almost impossible to steer clear of those two evils. The young visitor must not take the pressing invitation continually given in some parts of the country, to come soon again, or the reproach "I thought you'd quite, quite forgot me," or "I was afraid you were offended," at more than they are worth. The system of lending tracts from house to house, is mainly useful as giving the visitor an opportunity of learning when and where her visits or help are needed; and not as a sufficient reason for paying a fortnightly visit at each house.

If however you find a permanent reason for calling on any family, as on an invalid or an aged person to whom a visit is a real pleasure, not merely because a mark of attention; or if there is a person who cannot read, or only with difficulty, and who is glad to be read to, then your visits cannot be too regular; we have no right to vex people by raising expectations and disappointing

them again; and when you have been for three or four weeks to visit them, they will be watching for your return, and will be fretted by your not coming. If possible the same day of the week and the same time of the day should be taken for your visits to them, especially if they are living in a family; then the household is quieter, being prepared for your visit, and the person you visit is ready to receive you; perhaps some old friend or neighbour has stepped in, and would like to stop and hear too, if there is no objection. Most persons will I think find that reading aloud some chapter or psalm, if the persons you visit cannot read; or if they can, some passage from a well chosen book, or sermon, is better than mere conversation, which, when visits are often repeated, is almost sure to become monotonous, even with religious people. You should read over beforehand what you are going to read in your visits, that you may be prepared to miss any passage that would be unintelligible or profitless to your hearer, and to translate as you read any unusual word into its plainer English equivalent. It is difficult to find books for this purpose at once satisfactory to oneself and interesting to them. Neither wordy metaphorical writing, nor that which contains many or great truths in few words, are fit for our purpose. A single fact clearly and minutely rather than fully described, and their own personal interest in it forcibly explained, is what they remember best. I have generally

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live, so that they can think them over afterwards. A well connected story has a great advantage in this respect, the different parts linking themselves together in the memory; so have hymns, of which they are very fond, and which they soon learn. And even if they can read for themselves, there are not many at present who can read so well as not to find a great help to understanding what they read, from the commentary that clear and intelligent reading affords to the hearer.

The two admirable lectures on visiting the sick render it needless to say anything more on this subject. To the inexperienced visitor, I would add, that we shall not add to the comfort of our poor patients by being constantly, or long with them; our preparations for their comfort should be made as much as possible at our own homes; if they have no one in their family who can be trusted to sit by them, and give from time to time what is ordered for them, they should certainly be removed to a hospital: our chief use in nursing them, is as teachers to their nurses, not by precept, but by showing them how to do what is requisite.

In visiting persons in trouble, it is not what we say, so much as how we listen that gives comfort. Very "common is the common place," and "only makes their loss the greater." When the mourner has poured out as much of her tale as she can, she may be able to bear the soothing sound of some well known passage, — as the simple history of David's mourning for his son, the grief expressed

in some of the psalms, or the more wonderful history of sorrow the Gospel tells us.* But I know by experience what danger there is that those who habitually visit the afflicted should get into a habit of expressing sorrow to an extent they do not and cannot feel; or of trying to stem the outbreak of feeling with common places about resignation and Providence. We can never be too much on our guard against that formal show of good phrases, which is destructive of our own truth, and most burdensome to those we would help, dragging out of them a hollow assent to truths which they do not feel are true for them. Nor must the young visitor expect always to find much grief for severe losses; she must be content to hear the death of parents, children, husbands, spoken of without any violent concern, even with some degree perhaps of satisfaction; what grief is expressed is generally real and less than what is felt; but, besides that they cannot indulge in the luxury of nursing grief to keep it warm, and so "overget" it the sooner, many of them do not feel as much as those whom greater cultivation and easier life have made sensitive to every touch of sorrow.

Probably the sick and aged in workhouses and almshouses are the class whom it is most easy to visit; they need no alms, and if you give anything it is as a present to a friend, not as a dole to one of many; your visits can hardly fail to give pleasure, if only as a pleasant break in the monotony

* As Isaiah lii.; liii.; lxiii. 7—16.

of their lives, and there is no fear of interrupting work or disturbing the family; but your actual work will probably be greater, far less exciting and with fewer bright gleams to relieve you from the depressing effect of the sight of such unchanging desolation.

Whenever it is at all possible, ladies who employ themselves in teaching, should themselves visit their scholars' homes, to interest their family in the school or class, to secure as much as possible their co-operation in respect of it, as in regularity of attendance and preparation of lessons, and to teach their scholars practically by the respect they show to their parents' wishes and authority, what they learn theoretically in their catechism. Much good may be done in some cases in improving the parents' management of their children, if they learn from you something of the way in which they are managed at school; the example which thus comes before them is much more effectual than direct advice. As to giving instructions about household economy, spending wages, dress, &c., it is very much better, if possible, to keep all this for the mothers' meetings, because, if a woman comes to one of them, she comes to get such advice; but it is a very awkward thing to go to her own home and give it to her without her asking for it; if it is done at all, it should be only by those who fully understand the subject, — not mind, of keeping their own homes, but cottages,—and who have known the women long and well. You may

manage it either by lending them some plain and useful book on the subject, or by leading them to ask for the information themselves, telling them, when they have mentioned their own difficulty, how you manage it. If, for instance, you have given them soup, or some useful article of clothing, let them compare its cost with what they get themselves, and tell them what makes the difference; the old proverb of "seeing is believing" *may* prove true even here. It is slow work; but if you can get them to try a thing that really answers, not only as to expense, but in saving time and trouble, they will generally adopt it. But really to make them better housewives, we must, I am convinced, begin earlier, in the ways mentioned above.

With respect to the help in the way of alms that visitors should give, it is exceedingly difficult to give any general rules. Much has been said against giving — and most truly and justly. But happily the wants of the poor have a much louder voice, and upset all foregone conclusions to the contrary. If you have a special object in visiting, as a Bible collector, or for a clothing or saving club, which you are satisfied is a right object, it is better probably to confine yourself to that, and not attempt more; especially if your visits are regularly repeated for the purpose of religious reading and instruction at the request of the person you visit, it is safer never to give relief at the same time; but if such help is needed, and you have it to give, to supply it if possible through another; if

not, to make it the object of a separate call. In the first case, because they may be receiving relief already from the district visitor, or clergyman, or from private hands: in the second, because people will often ask you to come and read to them if they hear you help those you visit in that way, who really expect you will pay for their trouble in listening. But if you have the charge of regular districts, or if your object is to relieve the actual sufferings of those you visit, you will find it simply impossible to do so without giving in one shape or another, money or money's worth. We are told that we "should cherish that sense of our high vocation, that will make us think of other things besides merely feeding the body and clothing." Now, the district visitor may try to think of what high things she likes, but the people she visits have been so mercifully constituted, they *can* think of nothing else until they have secured some sort of food, and some kind of clothing for their bodies: and, I confess, the highest views I could ever attain of my own vocation, as a religious visitor among the poor and ignorant, have invariably sunk so low in the actual presence of hunger and sickness and nakedness, that I have been unable to think of anything higher than the knotty point how much coals and bread can be compassed with a one shilling ticket; or what kind of food, combining the requisites of wholesomeness for the patient, and of being attainable without skill, and with little money, may best relieve

the exhaustion or quench the fever of the sufferer. I am speaking now of women's visiting, not of clergymen; nor are such cases of absolute and pressing want of everyday occurrence, though no one can visit much without continually meeting them; and generally, which increases the difficulty, there will be numbers of them all at once, for a time, and then a comparative freedom from them. On the whole, considering who it is that feeds the young ravens when they cry, and clothes His children though they are of little faith, we need not fear much our falling too low for our vocation by engaging in this work.

The sum of this misery is so great, the causes of it so irremovable, the growth of it apparently so certain, that the thought of standing up to oppose it, is as a frightful nightmare, paralysing all our powers. And yet this, above all the rest, is surely our work. Like the rest of our work it must be one of detail; we must not waste our time, and lose our courage by considering how much is needed by the tens of thousands, but rather ask at once, whom do I know to be suffering? how far can I aid them, and how best? Here comes in again the evil caused by the luxurious separation of our homes from the homes of the poor, by which it comes to pass that, whilst the working classes in many rural villages and fashionable watering-places, are actually made paupers by the amount of charity bestowed on them, tens of thousands are left without one neighbour able to

do anything for their relief, and are becoming brutalised and savage through sheer destitution. And sensible men will answer applications for relief to these more distant districts, with infinite self-complacency at their own judicious and calm decision.—"I give only to the poor in my own district, where I know them, and that it is properly applied." I believe the last time I heard this answer, the speakers did not know that the landlords of all the cottage tenements in "their own" district, had just raised the rents of their cottages one third or more, on the ground of the great amount of *charity* their tenants received. Such are the follies or crimes committed in the name of charity.

There are three causes of this suffering (not to speak now of the most universal one, drunkenness): illness; being thrown out of work by a temporary failure of trade; or having learned no trade but what is always ill paid. And there are three questions concerning these to which it is necessary to get some clear answer that may serve as a general guide to our efforts for their relief. 1st. Who deserve our help. 2nd. What kind of relief it is that is morally hurtful. 3rd. What real and effectual help would be.

We are told, repeatedly, and a very little practice will suffice to convince us, that it is very hard to give relief to the poor without doing harm; that either we give to the undeserving, or we degrade those we help, teaching them to be dependent, and to look for the charity of others for what

they should obtain by their own care; or we injure those whom we do not help because they do not ask, by making them discontented and envious of their begging and dishonest neighbours. And so some have come to the conclusion to refuse all aid, and to refer all applicants to the parish for relief; some refuse aid to any but persons they know; some give only through accredited channels. But most prefer taking on themselves the tremendous risk of leaving honest industrious people to starvation or crime, and of rearing a population of paupers, to the giving up their own undoubted right to give away or withhold their own money just as they please. Now, the first may be right or wrong; but parish relief is not alms; it is not charity at all; it is just as much and no more that the law says the destitute shall have, and it is as much their right as the soldier's pension is his. And if we come to the conclusion this is all it is good for the poor to receive, we must omit from our Bibles some considerable portion of the New and Old Testament. To give to none but persons we know, would be a safe and perhaps a right rule for those who live amongst the poor and suffering, and are employed in making themselves acquainted with their wants. But those who adopt it without doing this, will on the whole help the least deserving and the least suffering. The deep waters of suffering are known to those only who dive beneath the noisy surface. To know a family to be badly off, out of work, ill, is not enough to

secure you from doing harm by giving to them; the woman who comes to beg of you, will beg of others; she who will not beg gets no help from any one. To give through those who have the best means of knowing is the safest way; yet this is also limited; clergymen cannot know all, may be taken in, and are sometimes prejudiced; the same objection lies against every other almoner by himself; nothing but a combination of all workers, with all givers, can really attain anything like an effectual and just distribution.

A great deal of nonsense is talked about this, under the name of political economy; not so much perhaps from stinginess as from our vanity being so grievously affronted at the idea of our being taken in and duped. But we must consider that it is the indolence of our charity that makes this necessary or possible. It may be very true when every individual rich man tells you, "I do not know, I cannot know all who may happen to want;" but the question is, what business have we, the prosperous, as a class, *not* to know those, the miserable? How can we call ourselves Christians, whilst we do not attempt to copy even the righteousness of Job. A poor starving man knows that if he tells you he is very hungry and does not look miserable and ragged, you will refuse him; if you know he has pawned his coat, you will refuse him; if he confesses he is a rogue, will send the police after him. It will not avail him, honest or not, merely to say, "I am badly off just now, and cannot get as much

food for my family as they should have." He must make up a much more piteous case than this, or he will gain no attention, and must add hypocrisy to his other misdeeds in order to get what he absolutely needs. We encourage begging and imposition by refusing to give to any but overwhelming or novel misery, at least as much as by indiscriminate giving.

Bishop Butler, speaking on this subject, said: "It is to be remembered that no man has forfeited his claim to relief, until he has forfeited his life to the law." He was not a man to speak inconsiderately; yet, if this be true, if want, as want, has a claim upon us, if that claim is not forfeited till life itself is forfeited to the law; if till then we are to forgive our brother the seventy times seven; if, in short, that which deserves our alms, is not virtue, but want; this question in its simple form is quickly answered. Our law punishes no offence, not even extreme poverty, by depriving the criminal of the three necessaries of life — food, clothes, and shelter; on the contrary, it declares all shall be provided with them, recognising so far the truth of Dr. Butler's principle. He, however, goes further than the law could go: he says, all men in want have a claim to relief upon all private persons who have it to give. Nor can the Apostle's rule, "if a man will not work, neither shall he eat," be honestly applied by us to any one, for the satisfaction of our consciences and the sparing of our [redacted] unless we can find him work to do, or know

and do not merely suppose he can get it, and has refused it. In far the greater number of cases the work is not to be had at the present time. That it might have been got some months back, or that it may be got some weeks hence, is no relief for the present necessity. Nor should the fact that it is the man's own fault he has no work be decisive against him. "We cannot give to these families, they are such bad ones." "But I fear," answered a Quaker lady, "if we do nothing for them, they never will be any better." Have we never been idle? have we never done what we ought not to have done, or left undone what we ought to have done? Let those that are without fault amongst us help the faultless only; but if we are not willing or able to bear the full penalty of our own misdoings, let us not venture to exact it of our weaker and more tempted brother. Our idleness, our sins for the most part, bring no direct or outward punishment with them; theirs do, and that to so great a degree, we seldom have any occasion to take on ourselves the painful task of increasing their punishment, by cutting them off from that merciful alleviation intended for human sufferings by the implanting compassion and benevolence in human hearts.

Another mistake which women are perhaps more apt to make than men, is that of thinking we have a right to expect a family will be for ever grateful and obedient to our advice, and will change all their bad habits because we have visited

minutely charged to give alms to the needy, if receiving arms were morally injurious; if that self-respect and independent spirit which receiving alms is said to destroy be really a right and Christian feeling. There is clearly something wrong here; perhaps the following hints may enable the reader to go further into the problem than I have been able to do.

I believe it will be found that those charities or modes of giving relief which do harm to the recipient, which produce ingratitude, envy, deception, and pauperism, all err more or less in these respects:—Either they are administered in a mechanical way, not by friend to friend, but by boards or ticket agents; or they are quite inappropriate, and do not supply the real want; or they are totally insufficient. If you take, for example, the case of our hospitals, which have never been charged with a demoralising effect, you will see that they are free from all these defects, or at least they only fail when they fall into the last of them: for, first, no one is admitted into them who does not need the help they give; the relief given is just what they want, and is as complete on the whole as our present skill can make it. If they produce in some cases little gratitude, it is because there was no kind and gentle nurse, only the dry routine attendance. And too often they fail to cure, because, for want of room, the patient could not be admitted till past cure, or was dismissed before the cure was completed; and those who are dis-

charged often fall ill again, because there are no seaside or country hospitals for convalescents where their strength might be restored. Which of us would think of staying even in a comfortable home in the midst of a crowded city, to recover from a severe illness? but our hospital patients too often go home when just recovering, not only to live in a close, crowded, gloomy room, on insufficient food, but to work there. When our hospitals fail, it is not because the relief given is too lavish, but because their funds are insufficient.

And here I would remark, by the way, that the inefficiency occasions often much more expense than would have been incurred had the first help given been adequate to the need; as in the example before us, when the sick man falls ill again, and returns to the more expensive city hospital, not once only, but several times; and at last, perhaps, sinks and dies, and his family has to be supported by us: too often, indeed, it is by the heavily rated labouring men who are struggling hard to keep their own family from the parish; for in leaving the homes of the poor, we have left the poor-rates behind us also. How many cases of temporary lunacy become permanent whilst the poor sufferers are waiting in their care-filled homes, or in the gloomy crowded workhouse, for admission into the asylum, where, had the funds been large enough to provide an adequate sized building, they might soon have been cured. Thenceforth the lunatic will cost his parish 8*s*. to 10*s*. a week, till

the day of his death. In all cases of sickness, true economy is to use the most effectual remedies at once; the truest, to remove as far as possible every known cause of illness, at any expense.

Then there are the sick at their own homes. Such sickness as that spoken of in Lecture III. p. 81, &c., and such as almost all illness amongst us now seems to be — of that low character that needs delicate and nourishing food much more than medicine, whilst its very presence in the poor man's home makes it harder than before to get even the usual coarse food, when the sick person is one of the bread-winners. If the man is in a sick club, 8*s.* a week will hardly take the place of his wages, or repay the value of his wife's time, and though it keeps them off the parish, which is a great comfort to him, it affords little hope of arrowroot and wine, beef tea or jelly, or delicate slices of mutton, which in their best form are hardly tempting enough for the feverish appetite, palled beforehand by the sight and smell of their cooking. No one will say there is anything pauperising, anything beyond the commonest humanity, in providing these trifles to save a life*: whilst, on the

* I am persuaded it is simply impossible for women to visit the sick poor without giving the true medicine,— clothing, food, firing, — the something for want of which they are languishing, or, it may be, dying. Women do not, and I trust never will, understand the maxims of a (so-called) political economy, or high moral aims, by the sick bed. It may be all very true that the poor ought to be self-dependent; only that child that is choking with diphtheria must die without port wine; that consumptive

other hand, to give them things without knowing positively they are the right remedies, and how much of them is needed, is to incur great guilt. In this case, again, it is more efficient aid, and far more personal labour that is required, to prevent our charity from being a means of pauperising and degrading the objects.

The most economical way of supplying this want is having a kitchen attached to the girls' national school, where the elder children can be taught to cook such things as are most suitable for them in their future homes, and whence the visitors of the poor can furnish their sick with such food as the doctor has ordered, in a wholesome, well-cooked form. Here, again, larger giving and more effectual help is what is needed.

The commonest, certainly the most potent, cause of distress we meet with is, the periodical failure of employment amongst manual labourers: the want arising from this can only be palliated, not removed, by any system of charity. In the case of manufacturers, this want of work returns at uncertain periods, of two or more years, lasts an

girl *must* wear flannel and take cod liver oil; that sick man must be—at all events he is, dependent, and therefore the question whether he ought to be so may be postponed till he is well. And if we are to obtain the assistance of gentlewomen with limited incomes in this work, and if they are not furnished with the means of giving such help as this, they will, because they must, give up their comforts, their holidays, nay, the necessaries of their life, and then give up the work because their health fails under the trial. There is no choice in this matter.

uncertain time;—I speak from the worker's point of view;—is generally preceded by a longer period of short work and low wages, and followed by fever. Among the working population of London, and other large towns, it returns nearly every winter for three or four months. The effect of it is to "throw them back;" they sell their goods, their better clothes, run in debt for schooling, for food, for rent; and if they are honest in paying up their debts when again in work, it swallows up all they might have saved towards the next period of distress; so that each return of such a time finds them less fitted to contend against it, with fewer things to sell, less credit at the shop, less strength to endure hunger and cold.

It is said, that when a population is thus thrown out of work, much harm is done by lavish relief being given; that it checks the natural remedy, *i. e.* the driving men to leave a overhanded business and seek work elsewhere; and that it encourages improvidence when they are in work, because, instead of laying by, they trust the winter will be supplied by tickets and doles. I cannot tell how this may be, for often as I have passed through such times, I never saw lavish relief given; I never met, amongst manufacturers, a man who really preferred being relieved to getting work. And though amongst the towns of the rich there are, no doubt, many thoroughly pauperised by their idle charity, yet, taken as a whole, our people are industrious, and their having nothing to do is as

great a part of their trouble, as their having no wages to receive. "Why don't they go to the cricket field instead of loitering at the doors such a fine day?" "Oh, sir, they've no heart to play when there's no work coming in."

No doubt the system generally followed of relieving the unemployed by weekly doles of bread, or soup, or coal, is a very inefficient and painful way of relieving their distress. Inefficient, because it leaves them in just as much want as they were; painful to us, because with the utmost care it is impossible to distribute it with equal justice; and to those who receive it, because it is direct charity with a show of distrust: they feel they ought to be grateful and they are not; often they do not know who really gives it to them. They always seem to know when any one is doing, personally, the most he can for them, however little it may be in itself; and in such cases their expectations are as moderate as they often are unreasonable when what is done is little in proportion to the means. The only excuse to be made for this mode of giving is, that where the fund to be distributed is utterly inadequate, it goes the furthest in this way, and combats the most pressing enemy, the illness that follows long starvation. It has often occurred to me, after attending a revision of the lists of families to be thus relieved, that if the working men themselves who need the relief were consulted as to the best form of giving it, and as to the families who should receive it, and

were to choose out of their own number a committee either to work with the subscribers' committee, or to distribute the money collected in such a way and to such an amount as that has decided on, many of these evils would be removed: it would be given more justly, with less risk of neglect, and none of deception, and without that show of distrust on the part of the givers which makes it a degrading thing to the receivers to take our doles.

However this may be, what I wish to show now is, that whatever harm may be done by these modes of relief is owing to the inadequacy, not to the lavishness, of the money spent. When enough has been collected to provide work for those who are thrown out of their ordinary employment, not one of these evils can be occasioned. There is no room for deceit when each person receives at the end of the week the strict value of the work he has done and no more. There is no room for involuntary partiality or distrust on one side, no sense of being burdened by obligations to persons to whom they do not wish to be obliged on the other: there is no pauperising when the idle or drinking man knows that summer and winter alike he will get nothing by begging,—only what he earns by hard work. And therefore it calls out real gratitude, a matter of no small importance, if you consider how mean a thing it is to receive kindnesses without it, (to which necessity, and wife and children, will force many a brave man to sub-

mit,) and how ennobling and softening a feeling real gratitude is. I do not mean work provided by the Board of Guardians, when a man gets not in any degree the value of his work, but just so much as will persuade him to keep his family out of the (to the parish) much more expensive workhouse; and which is too often managed as though the object was to produce the greatest possible amount of bitter hatred in them, with the least possible amount of relief to them *; but of work provided by free subscription; and for which the work-people receive as much as their work is worth, the limit being, if one is needful, in the amount of work supplied. The work thus supplied should never be that of their own trade: it should, if possible, be piece work, and such as will not throw the regular labourers out of employment. There are very few places where such work cannot be found, where no roads need to be mended or made, no footpaths made good, no waste land to be drained and reclaimed, no building ground to be levelled, no stones to be broken, no new allotment gardens to be dug and trenched. Even when the amount to be given is no greater, giving it as wages for work done would relieve the worst part of what they suffer at such times—the idleness,

* Fourpence a day and a 4-lb. loaf a week, for a strong labourer, who had a wife and one lad too old to receive relief as a child: one shilling a day and four or five loaves a week to a little weaver, wife, and seven children; the work of both, breaking stones twelve hours a day.

the sense that they can work, and are willing to work, but that all their skill, and strength, and will is useless; that without any fault of their own they are brought to a level with the very weakest and idlest.

For women it might be more difficult to find employment, the materials for needlework being so much more costly than the wages; but on the other hand, women do not need so much for their support. By the purchase of good materials for coarse clothing, to be cut out and prepared by the regular needlewomen, (who generally suffer grievously when the labouring population around them is out of work,) and made up by the women who are thrown out of their usual work, which may be sold at cost price at home; or if in any great quantity, sent off to our colonies where the want of needlewomen creates a greater demand for ready-made clothes, and where the higher price would cover the expenses of carriage; provision might be made at least for the more industrious and notable women without any great outlay at first, and with a pretty certain prospect of repayment, to form a fund to be similarly employed during the next period of no work. The danger of interfering with the natural market cannot be insurmountable; and it is difficult to believe oneself bound to regard the vested interests of the cheap ready-made clothes shops.

This mode of giving relief would require a good deal more labour and care from the managers;

but the times when the want occurs are necessarily times of leisure to the masters as well as to the workpeople; and for ourselves, work is what we are asking for. But it requires much larger subscriptions than are commonly received, and this is the only real difficulty. When this has been removed, as at N— in 1857-8, when from 500 to 700 men and 200 women were thus employed for some months, no other was found to arise. But, too generally, we cannot raise such funds as would enable us to give work instead of alms. At such times employers have little or no ready money at hand; country gentlemen as a body are not the brothers, nor the keepers, of town manufacturers. And we have to consider that these times of distress are of almost periodical occurrence, and in most of our great manufactures return every fourth or fifth year, if not oftener. It is not, therefore, a great effort which we are called to make once in our lives, but one which will be required constantly at longer or shorter intervals; and after all that may be deducted from the expense, on the score of the slow returns of such unproductive labour, or from the better health we might fairly expect amongst our poor: the diminution of parish rates and prison expenses, — the two first considerable, the last not much, for our prisons are not filled by the class we should thus aid, but from those who have fallen below the workers; with all these savings deducted, it is almost certain the remaining expense would

be much greater than that to which we are in the habit of putting ourselves on the like occasions. Yet unless something effectual is done to prevent the worst consequences of such times, it is useless to try to diminish our pauper or to raise our working class. Every such time sweeps down its tithe from the one to swell the mass of misery and vice in the other; it carries off all their savings, destroys health, and stops education.

Their work is short for some months; they fare more hardly, buy no new clothes, and leave off laying by; still the prudent hold their own, though the imprudent and drinkers get far in debt. Then the work ceases almost entirely, for one, two, three months; then the savings vanish, the sick-club insurance is forfeited, they run into debt, sell their goods, their clothes, grow thin and feeble, and aged, go to the parish, and grow bitter and hard. When work returns many make way again; but there are some who will never be good strong workers any more; there are some, mothers especially, who will go off in a decline, and not a few who will never be clear of debt again, who have fallen out of the ranks of the honest, because honesty is all but impossible to them. Fever passes through the town and carries off the weaker ones, orphan girls and boys are sent to the workhouse; some take to drinking or to opium; church and chapel and school miss well-known faces, for it is the hopeful and the decently clothed only who go there.

When this distress arises from the dying out of a manufacture, through the introduction of new machinery, or any similar cause, it is of no use to prolong the struggle by such temporary aid. The introduction of a new trade can never be successfully accomplished by charity; individuals may be assisted in putting their boys to other employments; and emigration on a large scale may relieve younger families; it requires a considerable outlay at first, but this ought in every case to be repaid within a given time; and should form a permanent fund for loan to emigrants.

But, for all these purposes, where is the money to be obtained?

We call on the working poor to be more provident whilst they have work; they certainly might be so. Yet I think we mistake often what is true prudence for them, and that they often understand this better than we do for them. Some are very provident, and what do these do with their wages, when in full work? Not what is put down in our little books as the proper thing for them to do. First of all, they have to get better food, butter and cheese with their bread, milk with their tea, and a bit of meat; they have — and this keeps them back — to redeem their pawned goods, pay off their too long score at the shop, and their arrears of rent; then they get better clothes, bedding, roomier houses for their growing families, pay up their sick-clubs, buy better tools, get schooling for the little ones,

and apprenticeships for the boys, get a bit of garden ground and buy a pig. And thus they strive hard to lay up again a little stock of credit, of health and strength, to be "a bit respectable" themselves, to have a comfortable home for their children, something to look to in illness, and potatoes and bacon against the time when work is short and bread dear. And this they find better economy than living hardly and putting by four or five pounds in the Savings Bank. Too often they have not time to do this, and, in their own language, to overget the last bad time before another such time comes upon them; and then it is well for those who have got strong again by work, temperance, and good food, who have a stock of warm clothes, and fresh credit at the shop; they will stand the siege of want no worse than they did before; to them it will be hard enough, people cannot live on these things any length of time. This is the best way they know of managing, and therein their practice agrees better with some physiological facts than with some very current theories about the connection of scanty living and good health, which are, however, for the most part applied only to the hard working part of our community.

But if this be so, we shall not get much forwarder with our employment fund from the savings of the workers. If we sternly refuse to aid any drunkard, or idler, or their families, there will be more left — hard working, industrious, sober,

so to come into the market as to remunerate us. We cannot at the same time have "that bill at Gunter's that would keep a stud of hunters," — nor even the wished-for stud itself, and a soup kitchen where our temporary labourers may buy a nourishing meal to enable them to stand their unwonted labour. Twenty pounds a year may be very easily spent in cigars; it is often the price of one dress; it might be spent in enabling a hard-working struggling couple to establish their family in a colony, where, humanly speaking, they and their children will be above the reach of poverty. Twenty shillings difference in the cost of trimming a new mantle, wisely and liberally spent in nourishing food, might save a family of young girls from being left fatherless or motherless; and I cannot but think, the less trimmed mantle would, even in an artistic point of view, be the most becoming to wear at church, or at the Refuge Committee, fashionable resort though it be. I do not mean to say the one way of spending is better, kinder, more Christian than the other; this is a matter each one must decide for herself; I merely wish to point out the meaning of "cannot;" we "cannot" spend the same money in superfluities for ourselves and in necessaries for others; but there is not only no impossibility at all in the way of our choosing which of the two we will do, but we must choose one way or the other when the proposition has once come before us. There are a great many "musts" in the

world, which are only musts whilst we choose to call them so. There are also some musts which will surely prove to be real musts. "We 'must' either make much greater sacrifices than have yet been dreamt of" by any but a few enthusiastic exceptions, "or be prepared to encounter a perpetually increasing population of heathen outcasts." *

Besides these calls for pecuniary aid, which though perpetually recurring are not regular, and those which arise from accidental circumstances, sickness, &c., there are also permanent wants which require steady, constant aid; and these for the most part can seldom be satisfactorily supplied except by means that are self-supporting. Even though the machinery for their supply must be at first established by free gifts, it should be so managed that afterwards it may perpetuate itself. Schools are an example of this: their permanent efficiency is generally proportioned to the degree in which they are self-supporting. Our present system is in its first stage, and that is a hot-bed one. Our masters and mistresses are forced plants; and we set them to work that is as much below the knowledge they have been crammed with, as their school apparatus is above what the population want or can use; such schools necessarily cost much more than the scholars can pay, and their success is so far uncertain. Nor is it different with

* Sat. Review, 1858.

our more direct and personal aid; our aim must always be, in the first place, to help our people to help themselves. So when a family has its usual amount of work and wages, and cannot manage with these, though there is no other pressing distress, as sickness or old age, to struggle with, it is very questionable whether it is wise to give anything; and certainly regular doles in such a case are injurious. They begin to count upon them as a regular part of their incomes, and are tempted to go on as they are, without making an effort to amend their condition; and when the wages in any trade are such that they can just manage to get on in good times, but must be helped whenever bread rises or wages lower, that trade is not one to which they ought to bring up their children; which yet they always will do, if it is at all possible to get any work for them in it, because it is the easiest and speediest way of getting a few more pence for the present week: and to give them such help as makes it easier for them to do this, but does not make it possible for them to do anything better, is often worse than none. Any help which enables them to increase their own earnings, as an allotment garden for which they pay fair rent, a loan to set them up with the first necessaries for a new trade, help in getting a child into service, or a boy apprenticed, or whatever enables them to equalise their earnings over the year, as coal clubs do, or penny savings banks, and clothing clubs, which, though despised by Mr. Kingsley for the low moral

principle they invoke, are much valued by the merely practical mothers of our working classes; in short, any help which puts it more in their power to help themselves, is worth ten times as much as the same amount in any other form, both as regards the comfort it procures, and the happiness it diffuses.

Emigration seems the only permanently effectual cure for this kind of distress. Unhappily, it is only in times of actual want our people are willing to emigrate; and these are just the times when they have nothing, and when we can least afford the expense of sending them. They need more information on the subject. It would be a good thing if the reading books used in our day schools, amongst the medley they contain, had some accurate information about our different colonies, — the way of going to them; the outfit needed; the life labourers lead in them, and the general character of the work most in demand in each, — whether herding, tillage, or mechanical. This might be given in the form of stories of emigrants, written *à la* Robinson Crusoe, or as a geography lesson, quite as interesting and more useful, than that celebrated one on the names of the spurs of the Hartz Mountains. It is hard to believe intelligent young workmen would be so unwilling to carry their families to our colonies, if they knew more about them; and it would be well worth while for any visitor of the poor to fit herself to give such information, and to undertake the necessary cor-

respondence with the emigration and ship agents, in order to overcome one of their great obstacles—their not knowing how to set about it. But the part of this subject which specially concerns us, is the provision which our colonies might afford to the young women in our workhouses, or who, like our needlewomen, are unable to gain an honest livelihood out of them. Any number of servants we can train, might well maintain themselves there in respectability and in plenty. Those women who are assisted by government to emigrate, must be women whose characters have been irreproachable: it might not be necessary for us to be so strict if we could carry out the work in the spirit and after the example of Mrs. Chisholm. If every girl who left our workhouses at fifteen knew how to make, mend, and wash her own clothes, to cook her own food, to clean her own room, and to wash and dress a child; if she had not been allowed to acquire any positively vicious or immoral habits; if some lady qualified by age and experience could be found as a matron to take these girls out; and if some gentlewoman could be found in or would go out to the colony to superintend the home where the emigrants would be received on landing, and to provide suitable situations for them; sending home accurate information as to whom, and how many, could be provided with situations there; would it not be safer, more consistent with the principles of commerce, and happier, than uniting to force

this stock of unemployed female labour into a market where their only chance of employment is, that they can undersell the men? The difficulty is in the expense, but as far as the workhouse and the prison are concerned, it would be decidedly economical; and for the rest, if a fund were once obtained on an adequate scale, it might be made to a great extent self-supporting, the free money advanced being a loan, to be repaid within a fixed time by their employers (or husbands) to the agent in the colony itself, with a fair interest.

The poverty which most obviously presses on the "visiting lady" is what we may call chronic poverty; when the question how far greater exertion might place them above it must be decided before, by any trifling help, we make it easier for them to continue as they are. Sometimes the man is a slow or bad hand at his business; sometimes the wife is hopelessly thriftless and dawdling; drunkenness too often causes it, and often bad health. It is more possible to aid individuals in such families to rise, than to do any good to the whole. There are many other cases,— old people, cripples dependent on parish pay, widows and widowers with families,—in which occasional help in the winter or hard times may save a good deal of suffering, and cannot possibly pauperise. When it can be given in the way of light work, it is a double blessing.

I have begun with this, the material relief that

is needed, rather than with the kindliness, sympathy, and personal offices of love by which Christian women chiefly do their part in lightening troubles, soothing pain and grief, and rendering misery endurable; not because money is the most powerful agent of the two, but because the relief it gives must always, in fact, come first; because until we have really done what we can in this way, our sympathy will never be believed in, and that very justly; for, "if a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" These people we go to comfort are very like ourselves in many ways, and in nothing more so than in this, — that, however little they think of their own duties, they are well acquainted with our duty towards themselves; and when they hear or read such passages as that,— I will not say they understand them wisely,—but you may depend upon it they do not explain them away. Besides this, the lower we go, the less faith we shall find put in kind words or in human beings; nothing but actual facts will make them credit the possibility of disinterested love; and though the kindliness of the gift makes almost all the pleasure of the receiver, the kindness without the help will excite nothing but secret anger and contempt, if they believe it is in your power to give.

Further, sympathy and good counsel—nay, even religious teaching, though they will soothe and lighten many an inevitable burden, will do little, if alone, against that union of physical and moral evil, which is our chief enemy in this work, and in which the one so aggravates and increases the other, it were hard to say which is cause and which is effect. Such are many cases of dram-drinking; such is the case of the over-worked, anxious patient spoken of in Lecture III., and probably in all cases of opium eating. Such is the case with the unhappy beings for whom our refuges and homes are opened. Want, trouble, and sin, all produce disease: it becomes hereditary; weakens the soul and excites the body; the depraved mind and body reacting on each other, the victims have no power to turn back themselves, no power to yield to being turned — but great strength to resist all attempts to rescue them; and that strength not under their own control, their will is powerless except for evil. If we could get the young women in our workhouses to believe in us as their friends, and to follow our advice, *that* alone will not give them a livelihood, nor make it possible for them to gain it honestly. Suppose that our intercourse with them begins to operate on one of them, as it is expected to do, giving her gentler, more humanised thoughts; will not the first effect be utter discontent with her position, her companions, herself? It is right she should

feel this; but if we go no further — open no way in which by striving she may get above it; if she is still to revolve between the workhouse, the prison, and the street, it is useless. How can they have the fortitude to fight their way out of dishonesty or vice, who have no other way of living; who are only just beginning to know the evil of vice, or to care for its being wrong? Nor is it enough to teach them women's work, unless we can send them where such work is wanted.

There are, however, many troubles that no gifts can remove or lighten; pain and death, prodigal children, bad husbands, lost wives; dearest friends gone for years they know not where; utter loneliness; and many others, besides the wearing anxiety, and too frequent hopelessness of their lot. A friendly, interested listener, who will patiently hear out the repeated history of their troubles, and who can then help them to think not of those alone, but of the sure and certain hope freely offered to them, is a true friend and comforter to such. Perhaps these manifold sufferings afford to our poorer brothers and sisters such an education and discipline for heaven as compensates for their far greater temptations, and far fewer apparent ways of escaping from them. But of this we are sure, nothing but faith in God and submission to His Word, can give them effectual comfort in trouble or strength to conquer in temptation. Our sympathy, our kindness, our counsel, our money,

are utterly impotent to remove the burden from their hearts, or to enable them to endure it, except as they may lead them to trust in His love, and seek His guidance, who graciously permits us to be His servants for their comfort, and to use our abundance as a supply for their wants, "that there may be equality." *

* 2 Cor. viii. 14.

# PART II.

# THE PREPARATION

## INTRODUCTION.

Such work as this, whether pursued as the main object of your life, or only as a secondary employment in the intervals of more immediate domestic duties, obviously requires some special preparation, in addition to that general training intended by education, and subsequent to it. Indeed, if the education actually given to girls at all answered to the true meaning of that word, or approximated in any measure to that which the education of an English gentlewoman should be; it would not be necessary here to do more than point out the practical knowledge required for the skilful and thorough performance of their different employments; by acquiring which the results of their education would be at once applicable to the art to which they wish to apply themselves. But as it is, most of them leave the school-room very ill prepared for any work at all; fortunate only in this, that they leave it so early there is time for them to supply the deficiency themselves before the business of life begins.

To supply this want of education was one great object of the lectures established in London at Queen's College, and elsewhere. But very few of

those who feel the want can avail themselves of these, and as parents use them, they partake too much of the prevalent cramming system; nor will any possible teaching by others supply the place of that self-education which is all in all to women, but which the present requirements of our school-rooms render absolutely impossible there.* If, therefore, you cannot obtain the assistance of such teaching as really tends to education; steadily set to work to hunt out the requisite information, and study it by yourself; if you do not get on so fast, yet in the end you will not find you have lost much time. It is only for those who find themselves thus thrown on their own resources that the following pages have been written.

There are two kinds of preparation, then, to be considered; the mental habits to be cultivated, and the actual technical or practical knowledge which will be required for the main branches of the work before us, and which should, if possible, be attained before your whole spare time is engaged in the work itself. But if, whilst engaged in acquiring this, you can employ a part of your time

* We have indeed known girls of fifteen or sixteen, whose school hours and masters occupied them from 7 A.M. to 8 or 9 P.M. six days every week; (for, in the hour's walk allowed on five days in fine weather, they were accompanied by their Italian grammars, and at meals they spoke in French on a given subject;) who got up at 5 to read algebra and Euclid by themselves; but such cases should be regarded as demanding medical treatment, in which the patients, so far from educating themselves, are helpless victims of over-excited nerves.

in the actual work, as in schools, or nursing, with your servants, or in visiting a few aged persons, and will pursue this patiently, observantly, and humbly, as one who has all to learn, you will find the work itself a truer and safer teacher, though a slower one perhaps, than any other can be.

# CHAPTER I.

## THE EDUCATION NECESSARY.

INTRODUCTION. — THE EDUCATION NECESSARY. — WHO ARE EDUCATED? — OF THINKING CLEARLY. — CAUSES OF CONFUSION OF THOUGHT.—TOO GREAT HASTE.—WANT OF ATTENTION.—CLEAR THINKERS.—BISHOP BUTLER'S INTRODUCTION TO HIS SERMONS. —DR. ABERCROMBIE. — ARCHBISHOP WHATELY. — HOOKER. — HOW TO STUDY.—OBJECT OF STUDYING.— OF CLEAR VIEWS OF TRUTH.—MODES AND SUBSTANCE.

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"And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go. And David said, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the valley."

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We have been considering all along what work educated women of leisure may be able and are needed to carry on: and now we must stop to consider, who is educated. T. Grote, in his essay on education, defines an educated man to be one who is able to make his thoughts clear to himself, and to express them correctly and intelligibly to others. And he adds, "A great deal of what is useful for intercourse or actual business will be learnt very rapidly when it is wanted, if the mind has acquired two habits: 1st, that of making its

own thoughts clear; and 2nd, that of attending to what passes before it." Here, then, we have three habits, which it is the object of true education to form; that of thinking clearly, expressing correctly*, and observing truly what passes before us: this includes all that we shall need to speak of, and the more we obtain of them the more complete and easy will all our work be.

The first thing, then, at which you should aim in all you study is to know distinctly what it is you learn,—what the writer means; or, failing that, what you understand of his meaning, which parts of his subject are clear, and which are confused in your mind. You will say, perhaps, this is telling you to attain the power of making your thoughts clear by learning to think clearly, and so in fact it is; you must do it for yourself. A good tutor may make the most involved subject plain and clear to you; but not all the tutors in the world can give you the power of thinking clearly on the simplest subject, unless your own attention and thought is exerted on it; just as you might carry a child in your arms round the world without its being one bit better able to walk by itself." "Any one may, if he pleases, know whether he understands and sees through what he is about; and it is unpardonable for a man to lay his thoughts before others, when he is conscious that he himself does not know where he is, or how the matter

* It is scarcely too much to say that the present system of girls' teaching cultivates not clearness but confusion of thought.

before him stands. *It is coming abroad in a disorder* which he ought to be dissatisfied to find himself in at home." That we may not, when we "come abroad" as teachers or helpers, be found in this disorder, we must first learn not to be in it at home in our own thoughts.

One great cause of confusion of thought and inaccuracy in knowledge amongst women is the great hurry they are generally in to get to the results of the subject they are engaged in. They catch up very quickly the notion or fact suggested, and pass on at once to the next, without considering whether they have understood the whole of its import taken by itself, or the whole of its connection with the preceding step. If you would learn to think clearly, you must be content to learn slowly; to take one step at a time, and to consider before you leave it for the next, if you understand it; if you see what connection it has with what you have already learnt; does it result from that, or is it an addition to it; is it consistent with it or not? If you find you do not understand it all, or know the whole of it, secure what you do know of it by expressing it in definite language, of your own if you can, saying it over to yourself, as it were, if it is a simple proposition, but writing it down completely, however briefly, if it is at all a complicated statement involving more than one or two; and limit what you do not understand by considering exactly which part of the statement is confused to you, or unintelligible; and how far

the part you thus leave for the present unknown, is likely to interfere with your understanding of the rest. If, for example, you were reading a work on astronomy, you would probably have to leave the geometrical process by which the results were obtained, without understanding it, though the results themselves (being thus taken for granted), and what depends on or follows from them may be clear and intelligible; yet as to a mere learner who can neither verify nor extend his knowledge, and who, therefore, can teach it so far accurately, but will never have any security for teaching it truly.

Another cause of the confusion of mind and fragmentary knowledge so common amongst us is the want of attention. Of all habits cultivated amongst educated women, the habit of inattention in respect of what they read, learn, and hear, is, I believe, the most constantly practised, and the most invincible; they listen, they can repeat, but they never apply their minds to the real consideration of the subject for more than a minute or two at a time. People talk of the increase of mental activity, when the real state they speak of is rather an increase of mental passivity: knowledge and notions run hither and thither through our heads in such rapid trains, that the mind has little to do with it, except as the patient silent tramroad that receives all, keeps nothing. Let us look a moment—whilst these words are spoken in a much studied, hard worked, earnestly prepared

lecture — into the ardent hearer's mind. "*The gift of eternal life is the mystery which lies beneath the history of the modern world and interprets it.*" — "How striking that is! — 'More life and better — that I want; I know, eternal life means? — not what we used to learn, it begins now; rather vague, but some time I'll think about it — Russell's modern Europe — dull it was — Miss L. the governess — and the abstracts. I'm not attending — never do; interprets what? Ah! the age of chivalry — Ehrenbreitstein — eternal life interprets the Georges' reign. "*The longing for a manifestation of God is the mystery which lies beneath the history of the ancient world.*" Hypatia said she longed for it, but I believe it was herself she wanted manifested; — that they all did except that dog; — was it Plato or Socrates who prayed for it? Simeon's song, — "So the Word had life," — coral reefs — wild eyes; — doubt those savages did not long for it, never thought about it — New Zealand tatooed heads, — straw bonnets — gold fields, — "*interprets it,*" &c. Euclid would be useful in breaking through this tyrannous habit.

Clearness of thought will probably be best cultivated by studying the works of clear thinking men; and now you will wish to read what is useful in itself, as well as a useful exercise of thought. There is a difference to be observed here between clearness of thought and of expression; some writers are highly grandiloquent and vague, from not knowing very well what they wish to say; but

some, whose thoughts if you can find them out are worth gold, and clear as crystal, yet express them so elliptically, carelessly, or in a language so peculiar, it is very hard to find their true meaning. To be an educator in clearness, a writer should unite both. All these requisites you will find preeminently in Bishop Butler's Sermons and his Analogy; for precision of expression, exactness in stating neither more nor less than he means, for clearness of reasoning and fulness of meaning, he stands almost unapproached. If you begin with his Sermons, it would be better to read the six Occasional Sermons before the others, and then take the Analogy, and make it so much your own by patient and repeated study, as that it may become a standard to you with which to measure other men's reasoning, and of moderation in your own. But do not mistake me to mean that you will find these books as pleasantly fluent as Macaulay's History; perhaps there never was an English writer who so little saved his reader the trouble of attention and thought; but what I mean is, that if you do attend you cannot fail of understanding what he says; you cannot mistake his meaning, nor make any confusion in it, whilst you remember his words. But he has himself told us what behaviour he expects from his disciples; and lest any reader should neglect to read his works for themselves, I will quote his own words, in the preface to his Sermons; though written so many years ago, I know not where to

find a truer or a sadder description of our modern educated classes.

"Though it scarce seems possible to avoid judging, in some way or other, of almost every thing which offers itself to our thoughts, yet it is certain that many persons from different causes never exercise their judgment upon what comes before them, in the way of determining whether it be conclusive and holds. They are perhaps entertained with some things, not so with others; they like, and they dislike; but whether that which is proposed to be made out be really made out or not; whether a matter be stated according to the real truth of the case, seems to the generality of people merely a circumstance of no consideration at all. Arguments are often wanted for some accidental purpose, but proof, as such, they never want for themselves, for their own satisfaction of mind or conduct in life. Not to mention the multitudes who read merely for the sake of talking, or to qualify themselves for the world, or some such kind of reasons, there are even of the few who read for their own entertainment, and have a real curiosity to see what is said, several, *which is prodigious*, who have no sort of curiosity to see what is true. I say curiosity; because it is too obvious to be mentioned how much that religious and sacred attention which is due to truth and to the important question, What is the rule of life? is lost out of the world.

"For the sake of this whole class of readers, for they are of different capacities, different kinds, and get into this way from different occasions, I have often wished that it had been the custom to lay before people nothing in matters of argument but premises; and leave them to draw conclusions themselves; which, though it could not be done in all cases, might in many.

"The great number of books and papers of amusement, of one kind or another, which daily come in one's way, have in part occasioned, and most perfectly fall in with and humour this idle way of reading and considering things. By this means time even in solitude is happily got rid of without the pain of attention. Neither is any part of it more put to the account of idleness, one can scarce forbear saying, is spent with less thought, than great part of that which is spent in reading.

"Thus people habituate themselves to let things pass through their minds, rather than to think of them. Thus by use they become content merely with seeing what is said, without going any further. Review and attention, and even forming a judgment, become fatigue; and to lay anything before them that requires it is putting them quite out of their way.

"There are also persons—and there are at least more of them than have any right to claim such superiority; who take for granted that they are acquainted with everything; and that no subject,

if treated in the manner it should be, can be treated in any manner but what is familiar and easy to them.

"It is true, indeed, that few persons have a right to demand attention; but it is also true that nothing can be understood without that degree of it which the very nature of the thing requires. Now morals considered as a science concerning which speculative difficulties are daily raised, and treated with regard to those difficulties, plainly require a very peculiar attention. For here ideas never are in themselves determinate, but become so by the train of reasoning and the place they stand in; since it is impossible that words can always stand for the same ideas, even in the same author, much less in different ones. Hence an argument may not readily be apprehended, which is different from its being mistaken; and even caution to avoid being mistaken may in some cases render it less readily apprehended. It is very unallowable for a work of imagination or entertainment not to be of easy comprehension; but it may be unavoidable in a work of another kind, when a man is not to form or accommodate, but to state things as he finds them. It must be acknowledged that some of the following discourses are very abstruse and difficult; or, if you please, obscure; but I must take leave to add that those alone are judges whether or no, and how far this is a fault, who are judges whether or no, and how far it might have been avoided, those only who will be at the

trouble to understand what is here said, and to see how far the things insisted on, and not other things, might have been put in a plainer manner, which yet I am very far from asserting that they could not.

"Thus much, however, will be allowed, that general criticisms concerning obscurity, considered as a distinct thing from confusion and perplexity of thought; as in some cases there may be grounds for them, so in others there may be nothing more at the bottom than complaints that everything is not to be understood with the same ease that some things are."

There is something very peculiar in reading so full and humble a defence for his not having made his abstruse subject obvious to every one without giving them the trouble of attention, when one reflects how many books are now written and read, solely because the author has the knack of wrapping up common and obvious remarks in obscure and mystical sentences.

Dr. Abercrombie's works many young ladies know already; if not, you would find a good deal of useful matter in his "Intellectual Powers," and "Moral Feelings." He is a very intelligible and clear writer, sometimes perhaps indulging a little in Scotch lengthiness and fine-wordism, which is unpleasant, but renders it no bad exercise to make an analysis of these books, as concisely and in the simplest language you can use. What you learn from him is almost all directly practical for your-

self as a student and as a teacher. The chapters on the formation of habits, on association of ideas, and on guiding and educating the moral feelings (as distinct from exciting them), may be invaluable to you. Archbishop Whately's writings are admirable for clearness of expression; and if you look forward to being a teacher of adults, his essays on Logic and Rhetoric will furnish you with many useful thoughts.

If you are living within the hearing of the religious controversies of the day — and who is not? — and are thrown into connection, whether of attraction or repulsion, with partisans either of high or low or any church, you should by all means read Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity." Indeed, I should like to persuade all who have the time, and any liking at all for this kind of reading, to study it as thoroughly as they can, not as a controversial writer, out of whose armoury you may gain weapons to attack or silence your opponents, but as a standing example of fairness and calmness in dealing with controverted points; to make you more sure of the positive truths you have learnt, and less positive as to their negative side; and indirectly, as a master of sound judgment, wisdom, and admirable English.

If now you wish to try your powers by clearing away confusion and obscurity of thought or words, I can remember nothing so eminent in both as some of Emerson's essays; that on Over souls, for instance.

As you have to study quite unassisted, perhaps the following hints may be of service to you on your first beginning. A little practice will soon enable you to improve on them.

Set apart as strictly as you can a fixed time every day for study: two hours a day would be as much perhaps as most young women can appropriate to themselves without interruption, and this might be generally secured by a little diligence, without at all inconveniencing any of the family; but be your time less or more, try to make it as regular and daily as you can. Read over attentively the portion you propose to get up, making a note by those passages or words that are not quite clear to you, and marking the main facts or the necessary links of the argument which you will have to note down in your abstract. Then if you have found any passage obscure, from your ignorance of the exact meaning of the words used, hunt out the definition of their meaning, and if you can the root from which they come; and consider the meaning attached to them by the author, judging from the way in which he has employed them in former passages; it is in respect of words you will chiefly feel your want of a tutor's help. If your difficulty arises from your ignorance of some fact or opinion which the writer supposes you to be acquainted with, a good encyclopædia or manual on the subject may explain it, but should you often meet with such obstacles, and find yourself unable to master them readily, you should

leave the book you are reading for some more elementary one. When you have come at the just meaning of the word, and its special application, do not be in a hurry to adopt it in thinking over the matter you have read, but substitute for the word itself the best definition you can give of it. And do not consider the obscurity is conquered until you can translate the whole sentence into your own words; or can apply the particular word in some different connection than it stands in the passage before you; never be content with getting "a sort of notion" of what it means, and then running on to the next page. Then read it all over a second time; it is not a bad plan to read it aloud, though by yourself; making an abstract as you read, as shortly as you can as to words, but so as to note down each essential point of the facts stated, the argument founded upon them, and the conclusion drawn by the writer, if he comes to any. But books that are worth reading in this way, are at least worth being read through twice; and unless you are unable to do this, you will find it better to postpone making any notes until the second time of going through the book. After once carefully reading the whole work, you will be in a much better position for understanding and forming some judgment upon the subject of it, than when, as in first reading it through, you had to consider it peace-meal. Girls are generally taught to write abstracts from memory: I should strongly advise you not to do this. Let memory

rest, and exercise thought instead. Secure the substance of what you read in your memory by understanding, and thinking it over; you will then need no artificial aid to remembering it. The form of your notes is of little consequence; if you wish to keep them for future reference, they must be short and very clearly written; if not, it may be useful to make them an exercise in correct and distinct expressions. I used to make rough pencil notes first, and then go over them, with the book, arranging, correcting, and condensing them at leisure; but my time was unlimited. The main object of making an abstract at all, is that it secures a certain degree of attention and consideration to each paragraph; and by forcing you to read more slowly, it tends to produce more exactness than if you merely think over what you have read, without the test of writing down the substance of it in your own words. And remember that you have not mastered your author's statements, until you can think of them, and reproduce them in your own way without omitting any essential portion, or substituting something similar but not the very thing. And you have not learnt it so as to be able to teach it until you can express it in your own words. As long as you cling to the exact verbal statement of your master, not because it is the best way of expressing the matter, but because you would not feel sure it was the same truth if put in another form; you are remembering words, not thoughts—a good thing to do, but not enough.

From this cause chiefly comes the number of our religious Shibboleths.

In making this analysis of what you have read, you must separate the illustrations through which the writer has led you to the understanding of his subject, from the subject itself; or if they form a part of his proof, force yourself to set aside their beauty, and to note step by step the argument from analogy they afford. Tennyson's "Two Voices" would be an excellent subject for such an exercise, or such a passage as the 29th Introductory Aphorism in Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection." You will often find the illustration has been substituted for a statement of what is intended to be taught—a practice which is certainly successful in conveying a general notion of the matter very pleasantly, but which greatly encourages that listless vagueness of thought which you are fighting against. When, therefore, you have, by its aid (or in spite of it, as the case may be), got hold of the real idea or the fact intended, set aside the illustration altogether, and state the matter in your notes as exactly and plainly as you can without its help, though to do so may render your statement much longer. If there were any real truth or beauty in it, you will enjoy it much more from thus understanding the full force of the image it afforded: but if its applicability to the subject altogether vanishes under the process, the amusement of finding it go may partly recompense your labour.

Nor can any amount of labour, however great,

that is needful for the attainment of this object, be thrown away; it is all time and thought saved in the end. It is obvious that a book that is not worth the time and labour needful really to understand it, is still less worth being read without understanding. This habit itself is worth anything; it is quite astonishing how difficulties, doubts, and disputes vanish, when we come to know the true meaning of the terms in which we have been used to wrap them up. Another reason for diligence in this study—so far as it relates to getting at the exact meaning of the words we use—I cannot help reminding you of, though it is beside our present subject; how very ungraceful and untrue the use of technical, scientific, or philosophical words is, in an educated woman's conversation; what a notion of incompleteness, of effort, and display is conveyed by it; and how utterly inconsistent with the very idea of that repose to the reality of which she must attain, and the outward expression of which she should attain, in order to be in the full womanly sense of the term, a cultivator and helper of others!

You will read much less on this plan, and will therefore find yourself falling behind your companions in general information, especially about books. A girl who spends three years in getting up the works named above, cannot be *au fait* in the fashionable philosophy of the season. Neither will the greater correctness of what she does know be much help—rather, perhaps, an hindrance,—to

her success in general conversation. Still I think you will find, after a while, that you have read much more to your own benefit, and that though you may not be aided in talking, you will have much more pleasure in listening. It is quite unnecessary,—though *if* you enjoy it, it will be a very agreeable amusement,—to know a good deal of history, of travels, of biographies, or to skim all the sciences. But if you aim at being a teacher, and still more a guide and educator, you must before all things know thoroughly the little you need to know, and be able to express correctly and easily what you have to teach. You must know it so that when you are thrown out of the beaten track, you shall still be mistress of it, able to recognise it from your new standing-point, and able to use it in its new application; and you cannot do this unless you have learnt to fix your attention, control your thoughts, make them "clear to yourself," and express them correctly and intelligibly to others. The reading that is taken up as a real relaxation is a very different matter, though not less needful nor useful in its place. Whatever kind of reading really interests and refreshes you the most, do not be afraid to indulge in: only, as you will not have much time for it, let it be the best of its kind you can get, and not merely the newest; and keep it rather for the end of the day, or better still, for summer holidays. Dull tales, and all epitomes, books on science by amateur dabblers, and generally all ill-written books, and all of the senti-

mental, pseudo-religious class, should be eschewed as infectious poison. Poetry stands by itself with those who love it: what you already know and love will be your greatest refreshment in weariness of mind and body — what is still new to you, your most thoughtful study.

Another thing you must aim at in all you learn, is to come to some tolerably exact knowledge of the extent of your ignorance. But this is too general, perhaps you will say too boundless, a knowledge to be the object of your aim. What I mean is, that as in studying any subject we must take care to know clearly what we do understand, and what we have not yet understood, so far as we have gone; so in those subjects which you wish to learn, either for your own practice, or for the purpose of teaching, you must accustom yourself to distinguish between what is really known of them, and what in the present state of our knowledge is the most probable, and what is merely guessed at. When we come to speak of the art of nursing, you will see how very important it is to have acquired a habit of clear-headedness as to the extent of your ignorance. Most needful of all is such a habit of mind for the teaching of Scripture and Scripture truth. I cannot but fear that much of the infidelity of our mechanics springs from the positive dogmatism of Sunday-school teaching, generally the only religious teaching they have had, in which the plainest Bible statements, men's conclusions drawn from them, men's ways of stating them, and men's

guesses as to their connection with each other, have all been bound up as alike inseparable parts of God's Word, as what must all stand or be rejected together; and the quick-witted but unlearned youth, having found out one part of this medley that will not at all stand with another, gladly throws the whole away. So in Hearts and Hands, we find a man rejecting the whole Bible, because the doctrine of predestination to eternal destruction had been taught him as an essential part of it. Truth is one inseparable whole; but we see only fragments of it as yet: to make our particular fragment into one consistent whole, we must add to it something besides it. We cannot make it into a perfectly complete and satisfactory system or plan without doing so. Therefore, to make one portion of the truth the whole of it, is to falsify even that portion. It is "to add to these things," against which we are so emphatically warned: and it leads to "the taking away from the words of the Book." For the practical effect is, when such a teacher comes across another, who has been led to know and teach some other portion of the truth, and finds that he cannot bring it into consistent connection with his own way of stating his "system," he forthwith denounces the new truth as heresy, and its teacher as a most insidious and dangerous foe to Christian truth. The truth is always greater than our knowledge of it: so St. Paul was content to say, "I know in part;" but when men insist on every one adopting their little one-sided view

of one part as the whole, they exclude themselves from further growth in knowledge; and when they insist on others taking this portion together with all the views, and patches, and pieces with which they have tried to make a whole out of it, they are almost certain to teach falsehoods, all the more dangerous for the morsel of truth they contain. Now, however much you may be determined to avoid controversy in your own study, or in your teaching, you cannot omit controverted points from either; and, "it is scarce possible to avoid judging, in some way or other, of almost everything which offers itself to one's thoughts;" and therefore you will neither be able to teach others truly, nor even to hold rightly what you have already attained, unless you form something like a just estimate of your own ignorance of the great facts of the Christian Creed, of what you understand, and what you do not yet understand, of the truth revealed in them; and by acknowledging and keeping in mind in all your study and teaching, that there are, and must be, other sides of the truth besides the one you see; that others may look at the same truth from so different a point of view as to deem it a totally different, perhaps even a contradictory principle; that there must be a wider and deeper connection between your truth and the whole truth than you have guessed at. And do not fear that this conviction will make you hold the truth you *have* learnt uncertainly, as though some new truth might come in and upset it. On

the contrary, so far as we have rightly understood it, our growth in knowledge can only confirm our faith in it, and show us more of its inestimable importance in life and practice.

You will thus come to distinguish between our modes of expressing these truths, which are human, and the truths themselves, which are divine. How inadequate even inspired words are to unfold the truth of God, we may partly understand from the fact that the Word Himself became man when He would reveal to us God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, that He might teach us by living deeds that divine truth which human language can never express.

But not only in directly religious truths; in all matters on which you will have to form an opinion and to act, this habit of distinguishing between ascertained facts and ingenious suppositions, between what you really know and what you merely "think," makes the difference between good sense and folly. In almost all practical matters we must act on what on the whole seems the most probable: but that the application of an ingenious supposition drawn from one or two isolated and ill-known facts, to any particular, half-known case, should be a correct one, may certainly be possible, but its probability must be very small indeed.

## CHAP. II.

### THE KNOWLEDGE REQUISITE.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL. — TO KNOW HOW TO USE OUR KNOWLEDGE. — FIRST PRINCIPLES OF INDUCTION. — HERSCHEL'S DISCOURSE ON THE STUDY OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY. — NECESSITY OF GOOD SENSE AND INTELLIGENCE FOR THIS WORK.

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"She is the second, not the first.
A higher hand must make her mild,
If all be not in vain, and guide
Her footsteps, moving side by side
With wisdom, like the younger child."

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If you aim at being a skilful nurse, and trainer of nurses, a teacher of common things to the working women, or an educator of servants, you should try to acquire some knowledge of chemistry in connection with the human frame, and the laws of our health. Or, if you look forward to being a helper and guide to the suffering and the fallen, you should acquire some practical knowledge of the general laws of the mind, especially in connection with its action on the body, and the influence the body has upon the mind. Dr. Johnston's "Chemistry of Common Things," and in

some respects Lewis's "Physiology of Common Life," may supply the former. Dr. Abercrombie's works, mentioned before, will give you as much as you can practically use on the latter subject; and if you have studied Butler's sermons on Human Nature, you will have laid a foundation broad enough to bear a wider superstructure than this. There seems to be much want of a sound elementary work on the mutual influence of mind and body on each other, in health and in sickness. Dr. Moore's work on the "Power of the Body over the Soul," though very interesting, is too speculative to be sufficiently practical. Many useful hints, however, you may gather for yourself on this matter out of his work, and out of Taylor's "Physical Theory of Another Life." Elementary knowledge is all you need, or for the most part can have time to acquire; but for superficial knowledge we never can have any use at all.

The reason why we find most of our scientific knowledge useless in practice is, not only that we have rushed impatiently over the first part of the subject, content with knowing just so much of the elements as will enable us to read with interest the more interesting results beyond; but also that we are satisfied with learning the discoveries that have been made, without having any idea on what principles those discoveries were made and proved. How many a young lady can give a good account of the different substances contained in the blood, the change it undergoes in the lungs, and other

particulars as to its general course, who would be much puzzled what to do with a person in a swoon, whether to lay her down or raise her up, or whether to place her on the right or left side; or whether to stop the bleeding of a severed blood-vessel by binding it above or below the cut. And it would be ludicrous, were it not too serious an evil, to take count how many of those who read and can talk well of many 'ologies and sciences, could explain what sort of proof will establish one general fact, or could give any just account of a simple induction. Professor Faraday, in his letter on table-turning, has shown us how uneducated the very general ignorance of this matter proves us to be; and similar instances occur every year. In some very interesting gaol reports, a careful statement has been yearly made, showing that so large a proportion of criminals can neither read nor write, as establishes some sort of connection between the commission of crime and inability to read and write. To how many persons who have quoted and applied this fact for their different purposes, has it occurred to question what the connection really is? How many have taken for granted without any hesitation that it is "of course" a connection of cause and effect? How many who have heard this asserted have ever remembered, that to complete the proof they must at least know what proportion the innocent non-readers and writers bear to the guilty, and to the readers? How many have considered whether the

connection may not be that want of education and criminality are both effects of the same cause, and both therefore co-existent to a great degree with each other? Though it is obvious, if this be the nature of the connection between the two, it would be as wise to expect universal reading and writing would be secured by having a more efficient police, as to repress crime by teaching every one to read and write.

The correspondence occasioned by the comet's visit in 1858 showed too plainly the same "uneducated state of the public mind;" and the truth of what some one has said, "Persons complain of the prevailing ignorance of facts; yet those complained of, though possessed of less knowledge than they ought to have, have more than they know what to do with: their deficiency in combining facts, deducing from them general principles, and applying them, is greater than their ignorance of facts."

There is a book, written by Sir J. Herschel in 1830, and first published in Lardner's Encyclopædia, which one seldom hears of, perhaps on account of its discouraging title, "A Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy," which may suggest the (erroneous) notion that it would be useful only to those who purpose to devote their lives to that study. Had this book been made a text-book for English scholars, Professor Faraday's too just reproach would not have been written. I am sure it will amply repay you,

if you will thoroughly get it up before you begin to learn the elements of any particular science you may need. And if you have not time for both, by all means give the preference to this book. I cannot conceive it to be otherwise than most interesting to any reader of average intelligence; and it is so clearly written, without, I believe, a single unexplained scientific term, as to require nothing but attention to make it perfectly intelligible to any English reader. It will greatly facilitate your acquisition of what special knowledge you have to seek for; will show you how, and how far, you can safely apply the knowledge you have to your actual work; and will teach you how to use your own experience, and how to profit by the experience of others.

It seems to me that women need Faraday's warning the most, because we are so ready to make up our minds with considerable decision on almost every subject that comes before us which is dependent on facts *; and, having once done so, every fresh fact that comes before us is unhesitatingly twisted into a fresh support of the opinion taken up. Facts which prove nothing, and asser-

* The following conversation did *not* occur in "Punch." *Young Lady.* Which do you like best, Cambridge or Oxford? *Old Lady.* My dear, I never saw either. *Young Lady.* But which education do you think best, Oxford or Cambridge? *Old Lady.* I don't know; I think I'm not able to judge. *Young Lady.* Oh! Mrs. D——, *I never heard such an answer as that in all my life!*

tions which assume everything, inextricably woven together and used Parthian-wise, in flying, form the armoury of most of our enthusiastic partisans.

It will be said these things only show that scientific studies are not suited for women. This is a question I have nothing to do with now, as I am not recommending them; but certainly good sense and sound judgment are very suitable and needful for us, and neither are born of ignorance; as we cannot help forming opinions upon some parts of these subjects: as, if every woman were married and wholly employed in domestic duties, she could neither manage her household, nurse her husband, tend her children, superintend her kitchen and laundry, without acting every hour on her notions on various questions of medicine, chemistry, psychology, and the laws of health; it is of some importance that she should know something of them; at least that she should understand what information is necessary before she can form any reasonable opinion at all on the subject in hand, and when she is to follow implicitly the directions of those who do understand it. How many a time has a medical man given, as he thought, full directions for the management of his patient, and found, on his return, they had at once been literally followed and entirely defeated, because the nurse admitted some contrary circumstance in ignorance of its effect, or omitted something he thought too obvious to mention;—a restless patient woke up to take a draught intended to give him

sleep; an exhausted one left without food all night, because it would be such a pity to rouse him when sleeping so nicely, and the doctor said he must be kept quiet. So I have known pleasant tidings kept back from a heart sick with longing, because they would be "too exciting in her weak state," and disagreeable information fully detailed, "just to prepare her, poor thing!"

It is all very easy to attribute such fatal blunders to natural folly, or want of thought; but good sense cannot build on a foundation of ignorance, and the profoundest reflection will evolve nothing out of nothing. Women's work is so minute, so made up of irregular particulars, so dependent on such changing circumstances, and ought to be so exactly done, that it is quite impossible for any one to remember the directions needful for each if they are to be done by rule of thumb. Nor is any one's practice extensive enough to fix the hundredth part of the rules she may want in one week in her memory. A good cook, a tolerable nurse, may be in the course of some years trained in this way, by recipes and rules, without a knowledge of their meaning or of the principles on which they are founded. But a thoroughly accomplished woman, such as we are speaking of, who shall understand all parts of a woman's work, be able to do, to superintend and to teach them, must know the principles of her rules, and know how to apply them; must be able, when told what is wanted, to judge for herself how she is to accomplish it:

the best mode of doing so will be readily recollected, if the object to be aimed at is correctly understood, and can be varied to meet the particular circumstances of each case by one who knows what is necessary.

# CHAP. III.

## PRACTICAL HABITS TO BE ACQUIRED.

§ 1. BEING PURPOSE-LIKE. — A CLEAR PURPOSE: USELESSNESS OF WORK WITHOUT THIS: HOW IT SOLVES DIFFICULTIES: ENABLES US TO WORK TOGETHER. — § 2. THE HABIT OF OBEDIENCE. — § 3. THE HABIT OF ATTENDING TO WHAT PASSES BEFORE US. — OF JUDGING ABOUT OTHERS: KNOWLEDGE OF CHARACTER, IN WHAT SENSE NEEDFUL. — TACT, THE FRUIT OF ATTENTION TO THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS; NECESSITY OF ACQUIRING IT. — HOW? — ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE UNEDUCATED. — CAUTION IN FORMING ANY OPINION ABOUT THEM. — PERSONAL INFLUENCE.

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"How willingly men work to attain their end in their own way; how necessary is it to make them comprehend what is really self-evident; and how hard to bring them to a knowledge of the necessary conditions under which alone their design is possible."—*Wilhelm Meister.*

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### § 1. *BEING purpose-like.*

If the mind has acquired that first essential, the habit of making its own thoughts clear; it will not be difficult to cultivate also an habitual clearness of purpose and aim. It is the absence of this which presses itself very forcibly on one's attention, in watching ladies' isolated attempts to do good; and which, more than anything else perhaps, makes persons afraid of seeking their aid.

It is most important that before entering upon such a work, you should fix distinctly and clearly in your mind what is the special object at which you are to aim, and then take care not to lose sight of it in all the turmoil and complexity of circumstances in which you may be involved; otherwise you will be in continual danger of losing your own labour, and hindering that of others, by desultory attempts to mend all you find amiss, instead of doing the one thing entrusted to you; and the end of all such turnings aside is, that after a while you will find yourself striving for and aiming at your own will. I am appointed teacher of the third class in a Sunday-school: that is to say, I undertake to receive the children who have been through the fourth class, and prepare them, by a certain course of instruction, for the second. They get on well, we grow mutually fond of each other, and when the time comes for promotion they are ready to go on to the more advanced books; but it is disagreeable to lose these and begin again with a younger, duller set: if I forget my purpose in taking the third class, and object to parting and receiving, I spoil my own work and that of the fourth and second class teachers too. "No one could be so absurd." I beg your pardon, reader; this is as fruitful a cause as any I know of the inefficiency of these schools. So I have known a very skilful nurse, forgetting that *her* business was to keep her patient quiet, keep her awake from nine till eleven at night by

her eloquent demonstration of the impropriety of her having over-exerted herself between eight and nine, of the necessity of her getting quiet for the night at eight, and of all the evil consequences of not doing so. You think such stupidity incredible; it requires such great determination *not* to be guilty of it, that only a "habit" can secure you from it.

Suppose a lady is sent by the physician to minister to his over-worked, nervously depressed patient, described in Lecture III., page 81. She goes resolving to cheer and soothe him by turning his thoughts from his own wasting anxiety to that care and love which may lighten the present, and give him hope for the coming years. She finds the room deplorably dirty, the children snarling in rags, and crying for and getting "bits;" the slatternly wife washing at home, her water not hot, and her soap melting away in it, when the public washing-house is not a quarter of a mile off; a wasteful bit of meat frizzling into utter indigestibility over the fire, the man smuggling a lighted pipe into his pocket, and reason to think the wife has lately had some gin. The lady sits down, almost in despair of doing any good, on the greasy edge of a just smeared-down chair, and begins to ask about his health; and her sympathy wins, from the wife at any rate, the history of their distress; but the pathos of it is interrupted by squalls from the children, and sallies of wrath from the parents; and still more by the tone of hopeless grumbling

at everything and everybody that runs through it all. It is the old story; an early marriage without forethought; good wages all spent beforehand, loss of work through drinking, debts and selling up. Then hard and irregular work at miserable prices, with a tirade against masters, supplanters, landlords, and parish overseers, till the sick man is excited and distressed. If the visitor forgets what her own business is, and lets the story run on thus, or tries to set things to rights by intimating that it is their own fault (which it may be), by hints to the weary wife on the necessity of being active, clean, and saving; to the man that his tobacco is so much bread out of his children's mouths, and to the woman that gin is hopeless ruin (which it is); what becomes of the soothing and cheering? The physician, when he comes again, will be pretty sure to find, in the increased despondency and irritability of his patient, the effects of the moral remedy that has been applied. So in visiting in workhouses, in hospitals, in reformatories, in gaols, everywhere there will be innumerable temptations in every shape and springing up at every step, to a quick-sighted woman to assume some other work; to do the guardian's, master's, matron's, doctor's, clergyman's, magistrate's, father's and mother's work besides, and therefore instead of, that very sufficient work committed to the lady visitor.

This clearness of purpose will set aside many practical difficulties, and answer many of the ques-

tions that now continually perplex us. Such are questions as to who are fit to be admitted to certain advantages, and with whom we can unite conscientiously for the attainment of some common and desirable end. There are some who object to nursing sick soldiers if Roman Catholics are allowed to make the gruel or bind the wound; some who can have nothing to do with a soup kitchen, if the most active supporter of it is suspected of being secretly Puseyistical. Or a school is opened to teach children reading and writing, sewing and knitting, above all to teach them their duty, that to their parents included; and one of the first things is to set their parents' authority, or at least their wishes, at defiance by cropping all their children's hair. Or a sewing class is formed; but Mary D—— refused to come to Mrs. ——'s Sunday Bible class, so she must not be taught to sew: and Martha Brown's family are chartists, and dissenters, and violent about the church rates, and it would never do to encourage such people; one must draw a line somewhere. Now except so far as the object of the undertaking limits the admission and forms the rules, it is unnecessary to make arbitrary ones; but in managing such matters we are apt silently to include the indulgence of our own predilections and humours in the object to be aimed at, which we should not like to set down in black and white as a part of our plan; which, if they once came distinctly before our minds as our ulterior object, we should

at once repudiate. Whenever you find yourself getting excited in your work, or discouraged, or tempted to entangle it with new rules and limitations, just stop to ask yourself, "What is the object and purpose of this work?" The consciousness that you are wandering from it will soon become strong enough, if you always attend to its first warning, to keep you straight on your way.

One most important result of such a habit is, that in learning thus to mind your own business, you will learn practically to respect the right of your fellow-workers to work and think in their own way, *i. e.* so far as you are concerned. But this habit is more likely to be attained by our having enough to do and think of in our own department, than by an appeal to the noble principles of justice and liberty, which are seldom much developed in the consciences of women.

§ 2. *The habit of obedience.*

Closely connected with this distinctness of purpose is the capacity for obeying truly. It is indeed an essential characteristic of a gentlewoman; but weak-minded persons, though in other respects gentle, are very incapable of it. The obedience you must learn to render, would you be of any use at all in the higher branches of such works as these, and without which you can only be a hinderer of others' work, instead of being useful in your own, must be an obedience uniform and invariable, which those under whose direction you act may rely upon as they do on the rising and

setting of the sun: an upright obedience that will not make keeping the letter of the directions given a plea for disobeying their spirit, nor following their meaning a reason for deviating from the letter: and an intelligent and willing obedience that will do, to the utmost of your power and care, frankly and truly what you know is desired. And this requires some width and strength of mind, and a good deal of that faith that comes from the exercise of right reason, in opposition to the dictates of a narrow understanding acting on imperfect information. Of course you must consider, in the first instance, whose direction you can on the whole safely put yourself under, — whose work you will thus help; but whilst actually doing it you have no choice honourably left you. And it requires a good deal of resolution to carry out another's plan in the very best way you can devise for ensuring its success, when all the while you know your own way would be so much better, safer, more desirable: or when, suddenly awaking to the critical nature of the case, everyone about you is clamouring to you to desist or try some other plan. This requires some of that true decision of will which must conquer all self-willedness, and that "courage to obey" which Tennyson has taught us is a part of the crown of womanhood. It is part, in fact, of that self-denial which is perpetually called for in one shape or another in these as in all Christian works: the daily, hourly, giving up of our own wishes, ways, and purposes, and

adopting the methods, entering into the thoughts, and carrying out the plans of others, is a hard thing to do at first, and only a firm will and continued habit can make it easy; even the being content to make sick persons comfortable, and little children merry in their own way, instead of in our own, is by no means a common attainment.

§ 3. *The habit of attending to what passes before us.*

Nearly all the work of which we have been speaking consists in guiding or in helping others. To do either, but especially the last, it is almost necessary you should learn to understand so much of their individual tempers, feelings, and wishes, as that you may avoid unnecessarily hurting them; and may be able to meet, and in some degree to sympathise with them. And to do this you must habitually attend "to what is passing before you" in them. It is a difficult habit to acquire, for in this sensitive and self-conscious age we are mostly so taken up when young with reflecting on our own character and feelings, we have no time to give to its cultivation; we must "be at liberty from self" to be able to sympathise cordially. And it is a difficult subject to speak of wisely, because it may so easily be confounded with that amusing dissection and discussion of other people's character, which is a favourite, but, I must say, a very shallow, study of young persons in the present day; and which under the form of a semi-moral philosophy gratifies a more ingenious, but

not perhaps a less vulgar curiosity than that which is displayed in the simple catechism of the Yankee, or the gossip of the uneducated. It is not by any idle prying into the secrets of the heart, nor by any ingenious speculations as to the disposition and character of the individual, that you will be enabled to help them: these things can only hinder your work. The sort of air some men assume in dealing with others, especially with the fallen or the very poor; the tone which says, "Now, my friend, I know you, it's no use your trying to blind me," can have no effect but that of shutting up the heart in sullen dislike; they know it is false, that the man does *not* know them; they feel it is an impertinence — that he has no right to know them.

You are in no danger of falling into so rude an error as this: but the error of imagining you do know and understand them, though expressed in the most refined way, is still an error, and will bear error's fruit. "Who knoweth the thoughts of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him?" Or where would be the fear and comfort of knowing that "all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do;" if this prerogative of the Great Father and God of all could be assumed by every little mediciner of the mind?

There are certain general principles of our common human nature on the existence of which you may safely depend in every one whom you seek to help, however little they may seem to possess them, however strongly they may deny them:

such, for example, is the judgment of the conscience respecting right and wrong; however it may be denied in respect of others, all insist on its truth in relation to themselves and their personal interests. And if you have made yourself acquainted with these (of which we have spoken before), you will find them much safer guides for your dealings with any individual, than your acutest guesses as to his individual character. No doubt if you know something of his past history you may be better able to judge what his associations must be, his habits of thought, his memories; and may be guided by these things in finding out some point in common, on which you can come near to him, and feel with him; and in judging what or how strong that bondage is he has to overcome. But even this is not necessary; and certainly the less you trust to your idea of their individual character, and the more you rely on those great truths which are common to all, the safer you will be. "When we take men only as they are, we make them worse; when we deal with them as if they were what they should be, we persuade them to all that of which they are capable."* The more trustingly you appeal to those common feelings and principles which make them and you of one nature and one heart, the more readily you will gain their confidence, and rouse those better desires which may have been long dormant, but are not yet dead within them.

* Wilhelm Meister.

When the children we have to educate are healthy in body and mind, it is neither necessary nor desirable to suit their education minutely to their individual idiosyncracies or temperament. Provide them with a plentiful supply of wholesome food, fresh air, active play; with a joyous, happy home: give them sound instruction out of the Scriptures and the Catechism, remembering that instruction is a putting in, not a drawing out: give them a little real head work, and access to a library copious in standard works: govern them by a very short and simple but absolute code of right and wrong, and the more you can leave them to themselves, the less you manage either body or mind, the better. But you cannot do this with those who are diseased in mind or in body; if you leave a child who has a tendency to a brain disease, or to a mesenteric affection, at such freedom to choose its own amusements, its own thoughts, its own food, it will read, or think, or eat itself to death or idiocy. And so it is in dealing with grown-up men and women: to take our stand on right principles, and to appeal to the universal conscience, and to the testimony it bears within each one to God the righteous judge of all; to appeal to truths secretly acknowledged though not felt, though perhaps outwardly denied, is a good and safe thing to do with all, certainly with the strong and healthy: it is a much wiser thing than trying to soften down and suit the truth to their particular wishes. But we cannot deal thus with

those who, sick and wounded in the battle of life, have need to be healed and strengthened, and to regain some power over their own thoughts, feelings, and actions, before they can obey even their own wills. They hate the truth — say to themselves it is not true — shall not be true; find that its being true is just the thing that makes them miserable, hopeless, and hardened; and to prove to themselves that it is false, they reject and renounce that common better nature you have shown them. Or they listen and do not care; the present and outward is all to them; mastered by an animal passion, there is nothing left of their higher nature but the avenging power of a boundless remorse.

When we have to help those who, being already grown up, have only one part of their nature educated, who are morbidly excitable in some ways, and hardened and seemingly dead in others; with those who through an evil life have corrupted and depraved their knowledge of good and evil; have learnt to count evil good; to love evil and hate good — we must judge for them what is good — what it is they really want without knowing it. And here is needed

> "The intuitive decision of a bright
> And thorough edged intellect to part
> Error from crime:
> A most silver flow
> Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,
> Right to the heart and brain, though undescried,
> Winning its way with extreme gentleness
> Through all the outworks of suspicious pride."

There must be, in such cases, a more "subtle-paced counsel." And that there may be, I think it is obvious we must have some further knowledge of the individual, some other way of understanding his peculiar morbidness, than general considerations of our nature will give us, though we cannot rightly understand a disease unless we first understand what health consists in. Suppose then you have to deal with one who has been outwardly much debased, and for that very reason is secretly very proud: or who having been all through life fighting against the world for the barest livelihood, suspects a foe in every one; with one who is secretly suffering from bitter self-reproach, but outwardly all the more railing against all earth, if not against heaven also. If you cannot understand and shield the pride,—put yourself in their place,—set aside the suspicion without seeing it by frank trust on your own part: if you cannot tell for yourself where they will be wounded, in what respect they long for sympathy, in what shape they can endure it, and when they cannot bear to feel their weakness known, you will never persuade them to their own good; you can scarcely help irritating, and so increasing the evil; it would be almost better to leave them alone. The skill to do this is what we call tact; I suppose because it arises from a delicacy of mental touch. The possession of it in a high degree is one of the qualifications that fit men to be rulers, and make women true helpmeets: the want of it, however

some may flatter themselves it is owing to straightforward honesty, really springs from mental clumsiness and a habit of culpable inattention to the feelings and wishes of others.

Now you will observe that what we practically need in this woman's work, is not the power of judging character, but power to perceive and enter into the actual mood and feeling, and presence of mind to meet it: no doubt persons may possess this power in very different degrees, but I am persuaded that the difference depends much more on cultivation by practice, than on natural gifts. At any rate it may be attained to a very great extent, by an habitual loving attention to what passes before us in those with whom we live, as shown by face and voice and gesture. So far as I have had the opportunity of observing, those persons who are accounted to have a special gift for the discernment of character, have been persons of keen sight, who have formed the habit of closely watching the passing expressions of people's faces: and those, on the other hand, who have been renowned for blundering out the wrong things to the wrong person, at the wrong time, have either been exceedingly deficient in the general habit of observation, or persons who are altogether occupied with their own feelings, or else very short-sighted. And Dr. Moore says, "It is not improbable that the reason that great readers are so constantly awkward and untoward men is, that the habits of their minds are unnatural, without proper sym-

pathies; some of their faculties have become benumbed by too constant a use of their eyes on print, *instead of human faces.*" One great advantage of going into society, especially that of cultivated women, is this habit of attending to the little feelings, if I may so call what are so potent for happiness and for pain—and of smoothing away the angles and jars of daily life, which is so much better learnt by example and early practice than by direct effort. Those who have grown up neglecting this attention, and who find themselves very deficient in it, should direct their efforts more to industrial schools, teaching, nursing, or such works as require rather care for bodily wants, cheerfulness, order, manual dexterity, energy, or good sense; and not undertake the responsibility of labouring amongst those whose morbid health, injured or enfeebled tone of mind, or whose heavy afflictions require that they should be met with peculiar skill and tenderness.

Make it then a constant object of attention to know the unexpressed feelings, thoughts, and wishes of those you live with, and try to sympathise with them. Watch silently for the involuntary expression of these, silently acknowledge and respond to them: responding does not mean assenting; but that whether you think them right or wrong, wise or foolish, you neither ignore their existence, deny the persons liberty to feel differently from yourself, nor expect to change them by simply opposing them. It is by such

practice only you can learn to feel with the poor and suffering: there is no more mistaken notion than that this will be easy to those, who find it too hard or irksome to practise in their own family and among their equals. And lastly, when you have learnt to watch for and observe these things, do not mistake the effects you see for the causes you only guess at: you see that something is annoying, you do not know why it is so: be content with that; by guessing at the cause, rightly or wrongly, you only increase the annoyance: learn to respect not only the feeling, but the reserve that conceals it.

When you come to minister to the anxious, the sorrow-laden, or the depraved, you will need the utmost of this quickness of perception and refinement of touch you can attain. The expression of face and voice here is so blunted, so obscured, it almost ceases to guide you. And even then, without some knowledge of physiology, it must be almost impossible for you to be prepared to meet the strange moods of temper, the wayward turns of mind, which a morbid state of nerves will produce: or to tell when and how the remedy for a diseased body must be applied through the mind; or for the diseased mind and heart through the body. It is true that in most cases the main direction of this must be left to the medical attendant; but intelligent assistants are needed to carry out their plans: and in so far as relates to reformatories for women, the greater part of

the responsibility must be thrown upon womanly care.

There are two ways by which we may seek to obtain this power of meeting the various wants of each person whom we are called to help: and the Christian way is to unite both. First, as the hearts and conditions of all are open before God, and He has promised to all who ask it the presence of His Holy Spirit to teach them what to do and say whilst they are about their appointed work; we must continually seek in faith that the Holy Spirit will give us the right thoughts and words, and so much knowledge as shall enable us to meet the individual case of the person to whom we have to minister; and doubtless, so praying and looking up to Him for guidance, we shall not only be kept from doing or saying anything hurtful; but He will make our feeble efforts sufficient for the present need. But then we must remember His help is given to care and diligence, not to compensate for our idleness or selfish indulgence. And when He uses us as His agents to help others, it is by and through the natural faculties and talents He has given us, and according to the measure and power they have attained through the care with which we have exercised them. If we have never used ourselves to study the feelings of others nor to consider what they need from us, in order that we may aid them; we cannot expect that the Holy Spirit will suddenly endow us with insight into, or true sympathy with, the secret sorrow or

weakness of any individual, merely because we earnestly desire to help her: as well might a man who never was at the trouble of learning to swim, expect that by prayer he shall be enabled to swim at the moment when the life of wife or child depends upon his doing so. The utmost knowledge and skill you can attain, will in this ministry be all too little to save you from innumerable and sometimes fatal errors, unless you seek for and rely upon this promised guidance: to neglect to attain as much as you can of both, is to put it out of your power to follow the guide.

In the work proposed you will have chiefly to do with the uneducated, and you should therefore try to become acquainted with such as early as possible. Young children of every class are alike: but in dealing with those who are grown up, though their common nature is the same, and their thoughts and feelings in the main much the same as ours; yet the forms these take, and the way in which they are expressed or concealed, are so very different, you will scarcely recognise any identity at first. Story books about the poor, and even lives of the poor, will for the most part only mislead you: the latter have been written of those who were remarkable, *i. e.* unlike the generality, or have recorded only what was considered edifying in them: the former for the most part represent the poor as so much easier to understand, so much more simple and less natural than they are; as so easily guided and so very easily converted;

just making sufficient opposition to allow of the story winding up with the proper victory of good over evil. Now I think you will find it very much the contrary; that the less cultivated a man is the less susceptible he will be to the power of new truth, the less lasting impression will be made on him by it, and the more open he will be to error and mere impulse: that the less educated he is, the more enslaved he will be to the power of habit, and the harder it will be for him to acquire any new habit. Probably there may be more real difference in force of character, power of mind, and capacity for feeling, than there is amongst the generality of those whom a tolerably equal education has formed in the same mould, but their characters are less developed, and therefore seem at least to be less marked; and it is often far less easy to get at their mind, because the power of thinking clearly and expressing themselves truly (which are the main objects of education), are possessed by them in a very inferior degree even to what is common amongst ourselves. I have observed this difference very strongly marked in the comparative absence of expression in their countenances: and this may show us what sort of value to put upon characters drawn from physiognomical observations: in an educated person who is free from the necessity of hard manual labour, want of expression in the countenance may be a proof of absence of anything to express; but it is not so in these. However strongly they may feel,

you will not find much varied expression in those mouths that seem at the first glance all exactly alike, nor in those eyes and weather-stained features, that have been "set against the sun and sky" the most part of their lives.

The moral of all this is, we must be very slow in forming, and not very anxious to form, any fixed opinion about the characters of the people we labour amongst. The more ignorance, dulness, or vulgarity meets us, the slower must we be in giving up the hope of doing good; for these are signs of the want of cultivation, and not by any means proofs that there is nothing capable, and, it may be, well worthy of cultivation: whilst they show that the power of expressing what good may be there is lost, and that you must draw it out. Take for granted in every new acquaintance you make that you are ignorant of his character, and regard each discovery of it that comes before you as only a partial one; as a hint by which you may judge of part, but not of all that is going on there; and be content to be ignorant, keeping your object straight before you, and remembering, that you are not engaged in studying a character for the purpose of philosophising, nor a spirit for the sake of indulging your own kind curiosity as to its religious state: but that you are trying to get acquainted with a fellow-being, that you may be the better able to be his friend and helper. Persons question the sick and dying, as if the only thing of importance to them was that the visitor should

think they are saved—a knowledge which, as far as regards the sick person, is the merest impertinence in the world; for what possible difference can it make to me that Mr. Ryle thinks me safe, or not safe, or indeed thinks nothing at all about it? whilst, so far as it affects the visitor, it can only lead him into temptation. When you listen to their histories, notice what good, or even merely human feeling has the strongest power to move them, and be very careful how you make any demand upon it, or any direct appeal to it, except in the last resort. Rather silently take its power for granted, and show you reverence it as the mark of God's image on that soul: only thus can you help them to reverence it also. But if you can find no trace of any good feeling in them, be sure that, however much you may have learned about them, you do not as yet know them.

It will be wise also to be very slow, and not over anxious to judge of the good or the uselessness of our work among them. They may say a great deal about it, and the good it has done them, and that sincerely: they may say scarce a word, and look utterly untouched by it; but the first is no proof of its success, nor the other that it has been thrown away. The parrot's remark as to the usual proportion between talking and thinking often holds good here. Perhaps the less you think about the actual effect of your work the better it will be both for you and them. Take the utmost pains you please to do it in the best way, and at

the best time, but do not weary yourself about its effects; have faith in the power of God's truth, knowing that it is suitable to the wants of every human being; and in the efficacy of all God's work, from the highest offices of the archangel, to the lowest parts of the outward ministry of His kindness and goodwill, the literal cups of cold water which he has confided to us to supply.

I should like to have said something on the lawful use of personal influence and its limits; but it is too difficult a subject for me to enter upon, and I shall only say a few words of its effects. Throughout this whole work the personal influence that may be acquired in it will be the subtlest temptation of the more talented workers; and yet it is one great source of a woman's power to help and bless. To feel that

> "Her brethren, mightiest, wisest, eldest born,
> Bow to her sway and move at her behest,"

is probably the hardest temptation to which a refined and accomplished woman is ever exposed: "Why should I not influence them for good?" And in a lesser degree, and over lesser brethren, we may all be tempted to strive for and to attain it. It is a constant temptation, because in each individual case it seems so right, and *is* so agreeable: there is something so flattering, so very amusing in guiding people without letting them know they are guided, that we are apt to forget in the apparent effect how limited such influence really is, and how falsified it must be when

perverted to the service of self-will or self-glorification: that there is something, in spite of its refined form, essentially vulgar in any such exercise of it, our own poet has taught us, when he put together as twin feelings in his lady's heart,—

"A hate of gossip parlance, *and of sway.*"

Happy they whose lesser powers save them from this fatal snare; happiest they who, having it, have been unintoxicated by it, and have laid it down at the feet of their Lord.

Yet if you find you have any such influence, if you find any who will do things or abstain from doing them for your sake and from regard to your wishes, which they will not do from any higher motive, do not fear to persuade them to what is right. Indeed, it shows you have in their case failed to attain your real object, that you have not yet led them to feel the love or submit to the guidance of Him whose messenger to them you are; yet it is right they should feel kindly to you, who have shown a kindly spirit to them: a little right that may lead on to better things.

For this, as for many other temptations, there is no safeguard so effectual as real honest work; there is no safety from it in laying aside the work itself. But when we have to use all our powers in our work, we shall soon know their true measure: when we find our best efforts baffled by our own faults or mistakes in making them, by our slowness to perceive and meet the real wants of those we would help, by our awkwardness and

roughness in dealing with them; by our inability to express the kindness and respect we feel for them; when we meet coarseness and vulgarity face to face, and strive to subdue and stay it by the might of gentleness and love; then we shall know how far too little we have attained of the true spirit of gentleness, how little we possess of the power of expressing it. We shall find that our failures are much greater, our successes much less, than they ought to be, and would have been, had we been more diligent in cultivating the gift entrusted to us for this very purpose; and shall be more inclined to ask in bitter self-reproach, "Why is such a price put into the hands of a fool?" than to admire ourselves for possessing it.

# CHAP. IV.

## PRACTICAL PREPARATION.

§ 1. FOR NURSING: PRACTICE — THOUGHTFULNESS — ARTISTIC NURSING — USE OF REMEDIES — COOKING FOR THE SICK. —— § 2. FOR TEACHING: SEWING — HOUSEHOLD WORK — DRAWING: FORM, COLOURS — DESIGNING PATTERNS — SINGING. —— § 3. THE ART OF READING ALOUD TO A CLASS: TO THE AGED: TO THE SICK — ART OF RECOUNTING STORIES TO CHILDREN — BIBLE HISTORIES — TO THE UNEDUCATED.

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"The aptitude for teaching which God has bestowed upon a woman must be counted as meant for all services and occasions, and therefore needs to be tried in various circumstances, amidst the daily vexations of domestic life, amidst people who have no other attraction than that they are ignorant."

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### § 1. *For nursing.*

So far as this can be learnt by books, "The Care of the Sick," a little volume of lectures delivered by Mr. Barwell to the working women's college, will teach you as much as you are likely to require. Most medical men will, I believe, endorse my suggestion that an accurate knowledge of the extent of your ignorance would be one of the most useful preparations for this work. But the art of nursing can only be acquired by practice; and if you cannot at present obtain such

practice in a hospital (King's Hospital is the only one as yet open for the training of ladies as nurses), under competent direction, you should take such opportunities as you may meet with in your own circle, dispensing as much as possible with a servant's help.

But there are some habits which it is essential for a nurse to be possessed of, and which cannot be assumed in the day of need, but may be more or less acquired by every day's practice in health as well as in sickness: they are all fruits of that thoughtful "attention to what passes before us," which is the habit of the educated; and of that constant practice of self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice, carried out, not in the great deeds we love to dream of, but in the little trifles of every hour, which require no grand resolutions, deserve no praise, attract no notice, and afford no ground for self-congratulation; and which perhaps for this very reason have been appointed by our Heavenly Master as the proper means for the education of Christian women in patient humility and unselfishness. The art of being quiet without being breathlessly still; the low clear voice, quick and gentle movements; the knowledge when to be busy, and when to keep out of the way; the skill to steer clear of excitement by too great amusement or by too great dullness; the willingness to set aside at once all your most careful preparations when the sick person objects to them, or expresses some other wish of her own; entire repose of

manner and readiness of action when things go wrong; the thoughtfulness that has everything prepared and ready for use at the door of the sick room at the right moment, without any disturbance; the neat and cheerful aspect of the room preserved without rustling and without fussiness; the knowledge of the degree of light that is agreeable, and the pleasantest way of admitting it; such things as these will not make you a nurse, but you can never be one without them. So also it is a great point in arranging a sick room that whatever is in daily use should be at hand, without the nurse having to move anything else to get at it; whilst the room itself must neither be, nor appear to be, crowded up with furniture nor with the paraphernalia of sickness, and what is seen should not be otherwise than ornamental; but all these circumstances are equally agreeable for people in health, and if we daily attend to them the "it never occurred to me" will not be heard from us when engaged in nursing the sick.

Indeed it seems that as the day for violent remedies is past, so the importance of these—may I call them "nervous" remedies—increases. Whether we are more sensitive and excitable than our forefathers, I cannot tell, but I am sure every watchful nurse now finds it most important to attend to the effect produced by these little trifles. And if a yellow-coloured room could make a set of healthy workers melancholy ill, whilst in a blue room they are merry and well, pleasant and un-

pleasant sounds and sights may well be supposed to have a very perceptible influence on the irritable senses of the sick. They should not be disturbed by a multitude of objects, but whichever way they turn there should be something different and pleasant to look at; and if the illness be a long one, these things should be changed; a new picture, a fresh group of flowers and books, a new arrangement of the furniture, &c. I confess myself to having so great a dislike to being nursed by a person in black, that Mrs. Jameson's recommendation of black as a suitable uniform for nurses, made me shudder: in cold weather a black dress suggests cold and discomfort, in summer heat and dust; and at all times I am conscious that it is innocent of the laundress. These fancies in ourselves are to be kept under and subdued: but in nursing the sick they have to be discovered and yielded to.

Then you should make yourself practically familiar with the weights and measures used in medicine, and learn to read prescriptions, so that you could in any emergency make up a prescription accurately and readily. Weighing, even dropping out medicine correctly, does not seem to come by nature, and if you cannot do it rapidly and neatly, when you are in a hurry you will be tempted to measure by your eye. You should also learn the pleasantest way of giving medicines: how to take away the nauseous taste,—to give acids without injury to the teeth, to make up

pills, &c.; to air and fumigate the sick room, to prepare food with a spirit lamp, without turning out a burnt or half-warmed mess: the management of poultices, which you should be able to make yourself, fomentations, blisters, &c. with the least possible discomfort, and without wetting or littering the clothes: these are things that need only to be done once in order to learn how to do them, if you will but believe they are worth doing in the best possible way, and so set about them with thought and care, though your patient may be so little ill that he would not suffer materially from your carelessness in them. Ample directions for all these will be found in "The Care of the Sick."

Preparing food for the sick is one of the most important parts of nursing, an one of its chief difficulties. You must not trust to learning it by collecting good recipes only: this you should do in order to secure as much variety as possible, but you should also try each one you adopt by making it yourself, and this for several reasons. Very often the one thing on which its success depends is some trifling difference in the way of mixing and cooking, which is not set down in the recipe: then you will scarcely be able to teach a servant who is not a good cook to follow directions with sufficient skill and exactness to tempt a sickly appetite, unless you show her how to do it; and no one can be sure of having a cook at hand always when wanted, who is not determined not to travel without one. And next you must learn, and note down with each recipe,

the time it takes to prepare it, or you will miscalculate in your directions, and have to see your patient fretted and exhausted by waiting some ten or twenty minutes beyond the time when his meal should have been ready. For this purpose you should get a blank book, in the first page of which a memorandum of weights and measures should be made. And then the different directions for preparing food, which you have proved, and know to be complete; the quantity wanted of each material, and the time required to make it, being put down at the head of each. These directions should be put down under their proper divisions, as low diet, milk diet, &c., expressed as shortly as you can, and written in a large clear hand, leaving *nothing* to memory.

It is not generally expensive materials that are wanted; and the art of making a variety of pleasant dishes out of few and inexpensive materials is much more generally useful in every class of society, and is quite necessary for those who look forward to being visitors of the sick poor at their own houses, or teachers of nurses in workhouses or hospitals. And yet to know how to make good gruel, strong broth, plain clear jelly, eatable arrowroot, and to vary these materials so as to make three or four distinct dishes out of each, though not at all difficult, is really rather rare: a cook who can send up a very respectable dinner of four courses for a party of sixteen, will often prove quite incompetent to send up the single cupful of

food to the sick person's room in a tempting form. And to know how—when your doctor strictly forbids anything but "water gruel or weak beef-tea," and when your patient detests both,—to turn the watery oatmeal mess into a smooth, white, delicately flavoured, cream-like substance, and the watery tea into a variety of palatable white, brown, or clear gravy soups, without infringing in the least on the prescribed limits; this is indeed a triumph of art, which I could not have believed, had I not once seen it done by a pupil of Soyer, and seen the sick man's life, humanly speaking, saved by it; and this only required care to imitate.

§ 2. *Preparation for teaching.*

I shall merely notice here those special arts you will have to acquire, for the purpose of giving such practical and industrial teaching as we have spoken of above. I suppose no one will think it wise to attempt them all: which you should take up, and how far you should go in them, you must determine for yourself, guided by the opportunities you may have of learning one branch more thoroughly than another, and by the nature of the work to which circumstances and your own taste lead you to look forward.

In teaching sewing you will not find very much advantage from skill in the foppery of needlework, which just now it is the fashion with many to laud so much, especially with gentlemen who are benevolently anxious to find some occupation for superfluous young ladies, that may make them

content to live at home, doing little good and less harm, until they are brought out of the household cupboard to be married, or to fill up some family niche that time and chance may make vacant. The old traditions of shirt-making with their twenty or thirty rows of exquisitely fine back-stitching on exquisitely fine cambric, have passed away: but the invisible hemming or backstitching hems, the muslin embroidery and other inventions for destroying time and sight together, such as the cunning marking long sentences on samplers of the finest book muslin (such as I have seen done in our pattern orphan schools, and for which the said schools ought to be indicted under Martin's Act): the too much belauded stocking-knitting, and the too much depreciated crochet edgings, may be omitted without any loss in our parish schools, until our girls can stay there some years longer than they do at present. A really good plain sewer, who is clean, respectable, and has a clean room, can earn a very fair livelihood by her art: how far those other things—crochet, embroidery, and knitting—might be introduced into workhouses, as a sort of trade for those who can be taught no other, I do not know; it would be better than teaching them nothing.

But one and all of these would be out of place in the sewing classes held for the practical purpose of teaching older scholars to make up their own clothes in a sufficient and expeditious manner. It is in these you are most likely to find

yourself wanted: if you cannot at once be employed in one of them, you may practise in any day school by helping the mistress to teach sewing and to fix the work. Before you undertake one of these classes, you should learn to cut out, without waste of material, all the common garments, to fix them exactly and sew them firmly and quickly: such as a plain shirt, shift, skirts, flannel waistcoats for men and for women, babies' clothes, pinafores, frocks, girls' jackets and mantles, sun-bonnets, boys' caps and tunics. And if you can accomplish besides a plain, conveniently fashioned woman's dress, and can make up a tidy bonnet on a shape, you will not want anything more; but you must learn to take paper patterns from clothes that are made up, — frocks, jackets, &c.—in order that you may follow, a little behind if you will, the changing fashions; and that when you meet with a new cleverly contrived or commodious shape, you may be able to convert it to the use of your industrious clients. Do not attempt to charge your memory with these measures and shapes: there is a little book published by the Christian Knowledge Society, called "The Industrial Handbook," which contains very sufficient directions and measures for those articles most commonly required, and which happily do not change their shape, and this may save you the trouble of writing them down: it is so clear that when you have once cut out and made up the article by its directions, you may trust to it for

your future guidance. When you have to take a pattern of any garment, you should write on it the age for which it is intended; and if it is a frock bodice, the length and width of the skirt when made up. You will find it a great convenience to make all your patterns on the same scale, *e. g.* all of the size the articles are to be when made up, or all the size they must be cut out.

For teaching servants the first thing is to learn what has to be done every week, in order to keep your house in order and cleanliness, and to supply the wants and comforts of the family; and the next how this work may be so arranged amongst the six days of the week, and the twelve hours of the day, as to avoid any over pressure of work on any particular day of the week, or any great bustle at one time of the day. To save servants from the temptation to dishonesty, every mistress should be able to estimate the quantity of provisions, groceries, and other stores required in the kitchen, laundry, housemaid's closet, nursery, &c.; and to make peace and happiness possible among them, she should learn what amount of work has to be done in each department, and how the whole may be best divided, so as to make each servant's portion as distinct and independent of the rest as possible. But if you propose to devote yourself to the teaching and training of servants, you should take each department one by one; the housework, the laundry, the pantry, the kitchen, and the nursery, and try to learn from the best servant you know

in each line the best way of doing her work, meaning by best, first the most thorough, and next the least laborious. It will not be necessary that you should do it all yourself: most housework depends on such general principles that rules can be given even in books, quite accurate enough for the purpose. Still, all the finer parts of their work they must be first taught by being shown how to do it. You may tell a girl how to clean a room, how to wash and boil potatoes,—but in such work as cleaning marble ornaments, taking dust from pictures, using French irons, getting up lace, &c., in all things which depend on dexterity of hand, or on taste, once seeing is worth a hundred tellings, and is much less trying to the temper. You must be able to show your pupil how the thing ought to look when it is done, as well as to tell her how to do it: and do not ever allow yourself to fall below the standard of good work, nor be content to let a servant remain a tolerably indifferent worker: it is this class that fails.

Besides, if you know well how these things ought to be done in your own homes, (and from the state of things in the nooks and corners of many a grand house it is clear the mistress does *not* know this,) you will be sure to be complete mistress of the simpler work that can alone be taught in industrial schools, workhouses, and reformatories, and can certainly teach those you find there, to become efficient and skilful doers of such household work as they have the opportunity

of learning. And you may learn all these things without having a house to manage yourself, even without living in a well-managed one: the success and failures of others' plans are alike useful lessons to the observant; but if you can undertake the teaching of a young servant, you will be gaining very useful experience in a much more complete manner: only be always patient with her failures, never try to teach her more than one thing at a time, and still persevere in aiming at her producing the best work, done in the best way.

If you have learnt to draw, or have a decided love for it, it will be worth your while to spend a little time in practising that kind of drawing which it is useful to teach. If you are interested in the middle class schools, you had better teach the style in which you most excel: for this I would only say—what you must be tired of hearing—be sure you know and teach the first steps thoroughly, and that whatever you draw is drawn as accurately as you can. The essential qualifications for drawing seem to be a correct eye, and a firm obedient hand, and both may be educated to a great degree: I am told that drawing from models of the human form,—an arm, a hand, a feature, of the size of life,—teaches this accuracy of sight and hand better than any other objects can. Teach as much as possible from real objects in preference to drawings from them. Mr. Ruskin's book will give you many hints, whether you follow his directions or

not; it will tell you what is to be aimed at. To teach drawing to a class, you should be able to draw freely and correctly with a chalk on the blackboard.

In teaching drawing as a business, or subsidiary to a trade, there are two quite distinct branches: geometrical drawing, needful for surveyors, engineers, builders, &c., which is to be learnt in quite a different manner from what we are accustomed to call drawing—it is now taught first in our national schools and the Government schools of design, as I believe; and the designing of patterns for manufactures, or designs for carving in stone, &c. Regular lessons are given in this at the Government schools of design, and if you wish to assist any in learning it, you should yourself take some lessons there, or on the same plan.

Practise drawing the leaves and stalks of plants the size of life: copy a single leaf in full front, making its curves as correct, and the details of veining as minute as you can; then lay the leaf on your drawing, and correct every deficiency in your outline; draw it again, sideways, in half profile, the back, and in perspective: go on to single fruit, flowers, little sprays, such as those of the creeping ivy; and then more complicated branches, as a spray of birch with its catkins, a fern leaf, a hazel twig with its nuts, flowers among their own leaves, &c.; keep a pencil and a bit of waste paper by your side to copy at once any new line that strikes you as graceful in a leaf. And when you are

quite at home amongst them, combine them together in groups, wreaths and knots, admitting however only one plant into a group. Then draw the outline, say of a cup or vase, or the capital of a Gothic pillar that admits of foliage, and see how you can arrange your flowers and leaves, or leaves and stalks upon its surface, so as to preserve their own character whilst strictly conforming to the use which what they are to ornament is designed to serve; and so as to bring out and illustrate, not to conceal its form.

The art of designing patterns for china, for ornamenting flat walls with colour, for coloured dresses, for lace, &c., are all as distinct as are the manufactures themselves: to know any one of them you would have to learn what is practicable and what is not, which depends on the capability of the material in which it is to be executed, and on the expense of working it: this varies very much, and to the uninitiated most mysteriously, with each pattern, and is affected by very slight alterations in it. Your help in these arts will be more useful in suggesting improvements in points of taste; in teaching something of the harmony of colours and the beauty of forms to those who are beginning to practise them, than in actually teaching the art. Get a few patterns that are commonly used: you will often find in them traces of something that was really good, but which through repeated copying is now distorted into a confusion of unmeaning forms and inharmonious colours.

Make out where the error lies, and set yourself to restore them to their original intention: and make variations in them, adopting a different system of curves if the pattern is a formal one, or a different leaf or flower as your theme, forming out of them either such a pattern as will be completed once in the space it is intended to fill, or else so simple in form as that there shall be no offence to the eye, and no irritation of curiosity, by their being cut across at the edges.

Much has been written lately on the subject of colours, and the rules for their combination in ornamental patterns, &c. But to produce fresh combinations you must go at once to nature's school; for in this respect we differ so much from each other, and apparently quite as much through difference in actual sight as in taste, that it is all but impossible to lay down rules that shall be true even for the majority of persons. In copying nature's colouring, you must remember how dead and poor our dyes and paints are by hers: and when you notice a beautiful combination of colours in flowers, landscapes, skies, rocks, you must, before you venture to adopt it, consider well where nature puts it — in what light or shade, with what surroundings, and whether she uses it in her everyday and all-day-long dress, or as a high and passing delight. Her fullest blues, her gold and scarlets, are used in open sunshine: paler, softer tints fill up her shadows: and as the darkness increases, these come out more and more strongly,

while she turns her scarlet and crimson black, and uses pure white for her twilight glow, instead of the golden sunshine with which the meadows and wastes of our unsunny climate are lighted up by day.

If you sing and have a correct ear, you should by all means add to your own knowledge of music so much as shall enable you to teach singing in parts, and from sight. No one can have taught much in any school or adult class among the poor, without longing to be able to teach something of singing, and finding their inability to do so one of their greatest hindrances. Nothing can be substituted of equal efficacy for the restoration of order, arousing the attention, maintaining good humour and silencing evil conversation, for the simple measure of calling for a "part" song. If you have not the opportunity of hearing a choir or school taught singing, Hullah's books, or the school music books, &c., provided by Government, will furnish you with a complete method to study: Hullah's plan has been found too elaborate for a small class or for children, when the singing is a subordinate object; but if you have mastered either of these systems, you will readily be able to adapt it to your scholars according to circumstances.

§ 3. *Reading aloud.*

If you learn to do this well, you will probably find it one of the most useful, as certainly it will be one of the pleasantest, parts of your work; and as it

enters more or less into every portion of it, forming part of all teaching, nursing, and visiting, and as it is one of the things we all do of course, and which therefore is very often done very inefficiently, I am anxious to persuade all to take the trouble to prepare for it, by practising it in the best manner; that you may not find, as I did after some years of practice, my labour had been almost fruitless from the bad and careless way in which it was executed.

Of the way in which you should read when teaching reading, we have spoken above: in reading *to* a class, as to a sewing or adult class, as much expression as good taste will allow should be used: an energetic manner, and a tone varying with every feeling your book expresses, all but dramatic, arrests their attention, excites their sympathy, and helps them to understand it all more vividly. In a large class, especially if they are industriously employed whilst you read, there is always something to distract their attention, and it is very difficult to keep it up with a monotonous manner of reading, however good and correct in taste it may be. And you will often find they actually do not hear you well enough to understand what you are reading; when, if you change your manner, read with a sad or merry, or earnest voice, in the low, solemn tone of awe, or the exulting tone of success — though you have not exerted your voice in the least, every syllable has been heard in every part of the room, as you will

see in the responsive expression of the faces around you; in the bursts of laughter, the peculiar "cluck" of concern, the thrill of anxiety, or by that breathless stillness by which English people show when they are deeply moved.

In reading in the quiet of their own homes, or in the workhouse wards to the aged and poor—who are often partially deaf, and almost always "hard of hearing," from their slowness in catching at your meaning, and from your own unprovincial pronunciation—you must be able to read sometimes in a loud voice, and always in a clear key, trying different ones till you catch the one that suits them. Read rather slowly, very distinctly, very evenly, and with a voice well sustained to the end of the sentence, with as much expression as is necessary to be intelligible, but no more: never so much as will lead their thoughts from what you are reading to the manner in which you read. An energy and expression that would be delightful to your younger hearers, would be startling and confusing to them: they never throw themselves into the scenes you read of as the younger do; they listen as to a long past, distant tale, and could never comprehend why you, sitting in that chair, in their little room, and reading a book, should be grieved, or glad, or indignant at what is in the book. If you even read a question in a decidedly questioning tone, they think you are asking it of them, and expecting them to answer.

Reading to persons who are ill requires greater

care than any of these, and such as practice and close observation alone can perfect. It is often the most soothing medicine you can give them, but it may be easily made the most fatiguing and irritating. Read with a low tone, for all high notes and all noise is exhausting; a clear and distinct voice, that they may hear without any effort of attention; full and sustained, that the sound may have something of the pleasing effect of soft music; with a very quiet emphasis, just suggestive of a concord between the sound and sense, but not exciting; regular, without hesitating or breaking off to see what is coming, or to gather up the sense for yourself, — a most irritating thing, when the invalid, just lulled into forgetfulness of her discomforts, was being carried on by the train of ideas presented to her, without the fatigue of making it out for herself. And if you see your patient falling asleep, do not stop reading for a moment, but lower your voice gradually, and read more and more slowly, till it sinks into a murmur and the slumber is sound.

Now the very practice of reading aloud in these ways, and in this spirit, is sure to soften the voice, and make it more flexible and musical: very few voices that are really produced by the right organ, and allowed to come out of the proper channel, are harsh or unmusical. If you have no one at present who stands in need of being read to, you should practise it daily by reading aloud for half an hour or so by yourself. If you are learning

any language, or studying any book in the manner spoken of above, and after you have finished your day's lesson, read it over aloud by yourself, you will find it a great help in every way. Especially you should practise reading the Scriptures aloud; perhaps there is no book so constantly ill-read, as certainly there is none which admits of more perfect reading, than our English Bible. You need not be afraid of trying your throat; unless you have a cough, or are forbidden to use your voice, you will find that reading aloud, even the loud reading to the partially deaf (which must not be confounded with shouting), is an exceedingly wholesome exercise; but then it must not be practised with rounded shoulders, incurved chest, and a throat bowing down; but in an easy position, the shoulders allowed to fall down, and slightly back; the head nearly upright, and the mouth really opened. It is amazing to witness the violent exertions readers demand from their unfortunate throats and chests, in the production of a volume of sound which is at once half-smothered, from their forgetting to make the very slight effort necessary for opening the teeth and lips as they speak.

I must beg leave to speak a word here for a very useful though more humble art, that of telling stories readily and well to children and to the uneducated. It is a most valuable, never-failing resource for all who have to do with children, rich or poor, well or ill, both as a means of amusement

and of education. The most trifling circumstances you can remember about your own childhood, of natural history, history, fiction, will supply abundant stories out of which to weave new tales. For it is the manner rather than the matter that gives them interest: for children a story can hardly be too minutely told, but the description, if any, must be very short and simple, the incidents vividly told and fully dwelt upon, time and place omitted, and the moral will be more impressive if left entirely to take care of itself.

It is this necessity for minuteness of detail that creates a difficulty with some persons in telling Bible stories to children: they think it wrong to add a single incident, however obviously it is implied, which is not set down in the Scripture account, and irreverent to alter the words used in our translation. This is a feeling to be respected by those who cannot share it, but it is hardly a safe one to indulge in. Our children are sure to find out very soon that all the words of our translation are not inspired words; and it cannot therefore be safe to give them the notion, that their divine inspiration is a matter at all essential to our firm belief in the facts related in them. Nor can I on other grounds feel the alleged irreverence: if the beautiful stories related in the Bible are written there for the instruction of the little children of the church, as well as for the edification of its grown-up members; surely common sense tells us we use them most reverently when we teach them to our

children in the way that is most intelligible and most impressive to them. If you find the very words of our Bible the most interesting and most easily comprehended, by all means use them: if not, enlarge enough upon each incident, and tell it in such simple language as to arrest the child's attention and make the history quite intelligible: which way does *this* the best is a question of fact to be decided by experience, and not by our theories as to what children always like, nor as to what is right, which is altogether a different question. It is often said the use of common and familiar words lowers the Scripture history; that if a little child rides on a donkey every day, he must be told that "the disciples brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and set Him thereon:" that because he goes a journey, therefore travellers in Scripture must "take" their journey and be called "wayfarers:" a word which I always understood to mean a man who went about selling wafers. Now in the parables we almost always find the commonest events of everyday life related, as the most suitable for teaching the divine lesson intended: and is there any reason to believe that the sowing, reaping, fishing, swine-keeping, were named by less familiar or more exalted terms than those used by the labourers and fishers of that day, when going about their daily work? To this plan of taking care never to "lower" religious truth to the forms and expressions of everyday life — a plan just the reverse of that we find pur-

sued in the parables,—it is perhaps partly owing, that the children of careful religious parents have so often as entirely separated their daily social life from the Christian, nay even from the moral, law of God's word, as if they belonged to two distinct worlds.

In "English Hearts and Hands" we are told it was found better to repeat than to read the parable at the noontide meeting with the navvies, in order to sustain their attention and interest. It is generally so with those who are unused to reading themselves, and with the very ignorant: you will find that a readiness in repeating a short anecdote with spirit will help you to arrest the attention of a stranger much more than wiser words will. And the power of telling a longer history straight through without any hesitating "well and so's," or the addition of a number of little circumstances, such as the time and place, and your doubts about them, and why you doubt, and which on the whole was the most probable, and that it does not signify which it was—which have nothing to do with the main idea of the story,—will be a greater help than you could at first imagine in your intercourse with the poor of all ages. It is quite a different art from that of telling a good story wittily in our own society: you must not make it at all intricate, nor aim at a good point: what point there is must not be left for your hearers to seize for themselves, but be plainly told in the tale itself. Allegories, if obvious, are favourites, but are almost always

understood as literally true. In this respect, as in most others, practice makes perfect: and you have probably had occasion to notice, how perfect the habit of narrating things in a confused and prosy way makes people in the art of spoiling the best story.

# CONCLUSION.

THERE are three facts which I have sought to prove in this work.

The first is, that the works assigned popularly to "sisters of charity" are no special works of any set or portion of women, but are equally the work of every professing Christian woman, just so far as she has received the power, and can obtain the opportunity of carrying them on.

The second is, that anything which tends to separate women thus occupied from the rest of their class, not only tends to limit the number of workers, but injures the efficiency of their work; and altogether destroys the reflected benefits which would naturally be derived, from the right performance of this part of their duty, by their own families and their own class of society.

The third is, that the preparation needed for such a life and labour of love is just the preparation which gentlewomen need to fit them for the domestic and social duties of wife and mother.

If any of my readers have come to the same conclusion, let them act upon it.

"Christian life is action; not speculating, not debating, but doing. Feelings pass, resolves and

thoughts pass, opinions change; what you have done lasts in you. Through ages, through eternity, what you have done for Christ, that and that only you are. Women of wealth, women of talent, women of leisure, what are you doing in God's world for God?"

THE END.

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